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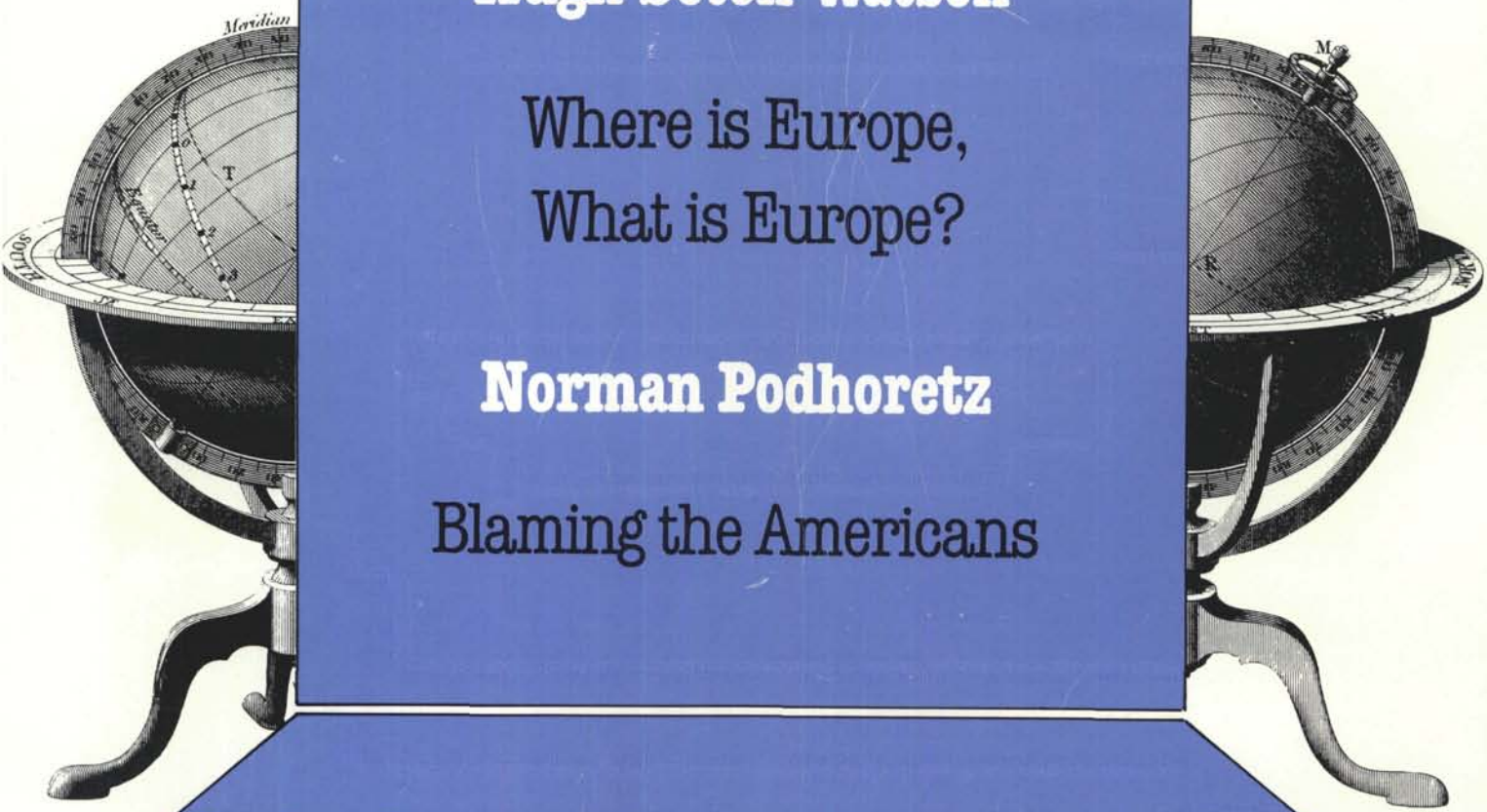

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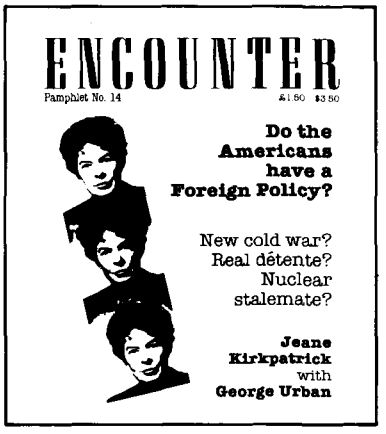

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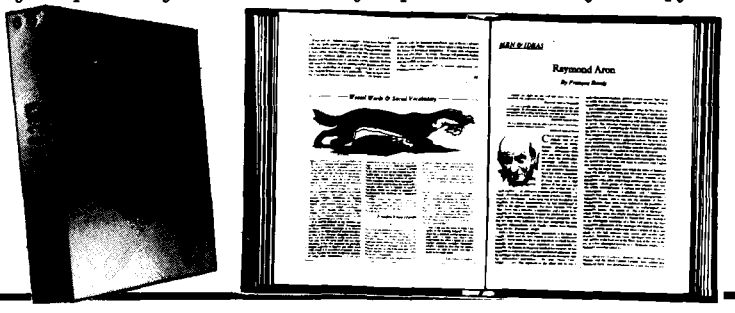

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JULY/AUGUST 1985 VOL. LXV No. 2 ISSN 0013-7073

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© 1985 by Encounter Ltd. *Ten issues a year (July-August and September-October are single issues). Per copy: UK £1.50: USA $3.50. Back numbers £2.25 ($5.00). Postage/packaging: 50p ($1.00). Annual subscriptions: UK £18.00: USA & Canada $39.00 air-assisted: India £20.00 by air. Elsewhere £19.00. Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194): UK Trade Distributors: Cutlerglen, 40 St John Street, London EC1 (01-608 1527). Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Manuscripts are returned only if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp) or International Reply Coupons.*

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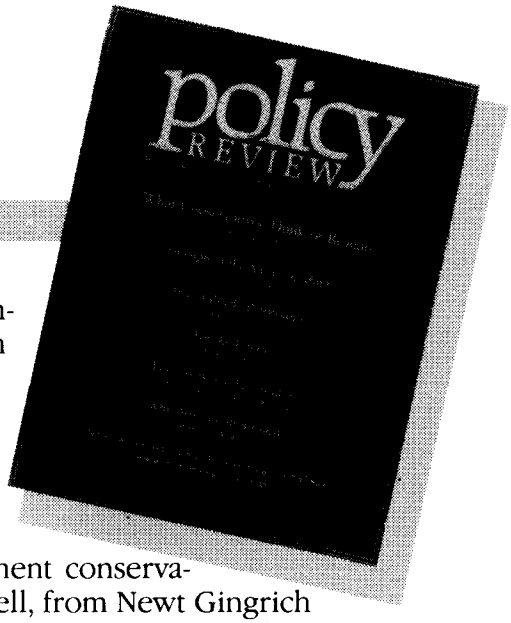

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Georges Perec

The Winter Journey

IN THE LAST WEEK of August 1939, while Paris was overtaken by rumours of war, a young teacher of literature, Vincent Degraël, was invited to spend a few days in a country house near Le Havre belonging to the family of one of his colleagues, Denis Borrade. On the eve of his return, rummaging through his hosts' library in search of one of those books you've always meant to read but never have the time to do more than flick through carelessly by the fireside before making up the fourth hand at bridge, Degraël came upon a slim volume entitled *The Winter Journey* whose author—Hugo Vernier—was completely unknown to him, but the opening pages of which made such a strong impression on him that he took scarcely a moment to make his excuses to his friend and the family before going up to his room to read.

The Winter Journey was a kind of story told in the first person and set in a semi-imaginary land whose overcast skies, gloomy forests, gentle hills and canals with greenish-watered locks were heavily and surreptitiously reminiscent of the countryside of Flanders or the Ardennes. The book was divided into two parts. The first, which was the shorter, recounted in sibylline terms a vaguely initiatic journey, of which each stage was marked, so it seemed, by a failure and at the end of which the anonymous hero (a man and by all indications a young one) came to the bank of a lake shrouded in thick mist. A ferryman awaited him there and carried him to a steep-sided isle in the middle of which stood a high, dark, barn-like house. Scarcely had the young man put his foot on the narrow floating jetty which was the only form of access to the isle, when a strange couple appeared: an old man and an old woman, both draped in long black cloaks, seemed to rise from the mist, took their places at either side of the young man, grasped his elbows, pressed as closely to his sides as they could, then—almost soldered together, as it were—the three climbed a crumbling path, entered the house, climbed a wooden staircase and came to a bedroom. There, as inexplicably as they had appeared, the two old folk vanished and left the young man alone in the middle of the room. It was sparsely furnished: there was a bed with a flowered cretonne spread, a table, and a chair. A fire burned vigorously in the hearth. A meal had been served on the table: bean soup, and a lean shoulder of beef. Through the tall window the young man watched the full moon appear from behind the clouds; then he sat at the table and began to eat. And on this solitary supper the first part of the book ended.

The second part alone made up nearly four-fifths of the whole and it became rapidly obvious that the short tale preceding was only an anecdotal pretext for it. It was a long confession, acutely lyrical, larded with poems, enigmatic maxims and blasphemous incantations. Vincent Degraël had scarcely begun to read it before he felt an uncanny sensation he could not precisely define, but which only grew as he turned the pages with an ever unsteadier hand: it was as if the sentences before his eyes were suddenly familiar, started to remind him irresistibly of *something*, as if on the reading of each one was imposed, or rather superimposed, an acute but uncertain memory of another almost identical sentence that he had read somewhere else; as if these words—sweeter than kisses or more treacherous than poison—these alternately limpid and hermetic, obscene and heartfelt, dazzling, labyrinthine words, swinging incessantly like a demented compass-needle between hallucinatory violence and fabulous serenity, were sketching out a confused configuration in which you could find (perhaps) in random array Germain Nouveau and Tristan Corbière, Villiers and Banville, Rimbaud and

GEORGES PEREC *was the most skilful exponent of the literary and literal acrobatics promoted by the "Ouvroir de littérature potentielle", founded by Raymond Queneau; he achieved the apparently impossible feat of writing a lipogrammatic novel without using the letter "e" ("La Disparition", 1969) as well as giving "e" its revenge in "Les Revenentes" (1972) where no other vowel is used. His major work, "La Vie Mode d'emploi", was published in 1978, and won the Prix Médicis. It is an extremely complex web of fictions, elaborated under constraints that are not visible in the finished text, rich in allusion, and at the same time a perfectly readable account on an almost Balzacian scale of a moment in French social history. "The Winter Journey", written in 1979, is the first text by Perec to appear in English since "Les Choses" (1965). Georges Perec died in 1982, at the age of 46.*

DAVID BELLOS, *the translator, is the author of "Balzac Criticism in France, 1850-1900" (Oxford University Press, 1976) and the editor of Leo Spitzer's "Essays on Seventeenth Century French Literature" (Cambridge University Press, 1983). He is currently Professor of French at the University of Southampton.*

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Verhaeren, Charles Cros and Léon Bloy.

Vincent Degraël, whose special interest was precisely in the field of late 19th-century French poetry (he had been working for some years on a thesis on "The Evolution of French Poetry from the Parnassians to the Symbolists"), first thought that he could indeed have read *The Winter Journey* before in the course of his research, or—more likely—that he was suffering from an illusion of *déjà vu* in which—as when the mere taste of a sip of tea takes you suddenly back to England thirty years ago—a tiny detail, a sound or smell or gesture suffices (perhaps that momentary hesitation he had noted before taking the book from its place on the shelf, between Verhaeren and Viellé-Griffin, or the avidity with which he had read through the opening pages) to make a mistaken memory of a prior reading overlay the actual reading to the point of making it impossible. But soon his doubts had to be dismissed and Degraël was forced to admit the evidence: even if his memory was playing tricks on him, even if it was only by chance that Vernier seemed to have borrowed from Catulle Mendès his "lone jackal hunting tombs of stone", even if allowance was made for fortuitous coincidences, declared influences, intended borrowings, unconscious imitation, the taste for pastiche, a liking for quotation, and opportune matches, even if one took the view that expressions such as "the flight of time", "winter fogs", "dark horizon", "deep caverns", "misty fountains", "uncertain lights of untamed undergrowth" belonged to all poets as common property and that it was therefore just as natural to come across them in a paragraph by Hugo Vernier as in the *stances* of Jean Moréas, it was none the less impossible to fail to recognise literal (or almost literal) fragments—at every point—of Rimbaud ("I saw frankly a mosque in the place of a factory, a school of drums built by angels"), or of Mallarmé ("lucid winter, season of serene art") or of Lautréamont ("I watched in a mirror the mouth mutilated by my own will") or Gustave Kahn ("Let the song die . . . my heart weeps/A dark smudge surrounds the light. Solemn/Silence rose slowly, it frightens/The familiar noises of individual waves") or, scarcely altered, lines by Verlaine ("in the endless *ennui* of the plain, snow sparkled like sand. The sky was the colour of copper. The train slid on without a murmur") and so on and so forth.

Degraël finished reading *The Winter Journey* at four in the morning. He had spotted about thirty borrowings in it. It was certain that there were others. Hugo Vernier's book seemed to be nothing other than a prodigious patchwork of late 19th-century poetry, an outsize acrostic, a mosaic of which nearly every tessellation was the work of someone else. But just as he was straining to imagine this unknown author who wanted to draw the substance of his own book from the books of others, as he was trying to picture this senseless and admirable project in its entirety, Degraël felt the panic of a mad suspicion rise in him: he had just remembered that on taking the book from the bedside table he had mechanically noted the date of publication, following the reflexes of a young scholar who never uses a book without taking down its bibliographical data. Maybe he'd been mistaken, but he thought he'd read the date as 1864. With beating heart, he checked. He had read correctly: that meant that Vernier had "shouted" a line of Mallarmé two years early, plagiarised Verlaine ten years before the "Forgotten Airs", written Gustave Kahn almost a quarter of a century before Kahn had; that meant that Lautréamont, Germain Nouveau, Rimbaud, Corbière and quite a few others were merely the transcribers of an unknown genius whose single work contained the very stuff on which three or four generations of poets after him would feed themselves.

Unless of course the date on the title page was erroneous. Degraël refused to consider this hypothesis: his discovery was too beautiful, too obvious, too necessary not to be true, and he could already imagine the dizzying consequences it was going to bring, the prodigious scandal that public revelation of this "premonitory anthology" would provoke. A huge field of literature would be affected; doubt would be cast on everything that critics and literary historians had calmly propounded for years and years. And Degraël was so impatient that he gave up sleep entirely and rushed back to the library to find out a little more about Vernier and his works.

HE FOUND NOTHING. The few dictionaries and reference works in the Borrade collection had no entries for Hugo Vernier. Neither the elder Borrades nor Denis could give any more information: the volume had been bought at an auction ten years before in Honfleur; they had glanced at the book without giving it much attention.

The whole of the next day, with the help of Denis, Degraël examined *The Winter Journey* systematically, looking up its fragments scattered through dozens of anthologies and collections: they found nearly three hundred and fifty of them, shared out among almost thirty different authors—the best-known as well as the obscurest poets of the *fin-de-siècle* and a few prose-writers as well (Léon Bloy, Ernest Hello) seemed to have used *The Winter Journey* as their bible, drawing the best of themselves from it: Banville, Richepin, Huysmans, Charles Cros, Léon Valade, alongside Mallarmé and Verlaine and others now forgotten whose names were Charles de Pomairols, Hippolyte Vaillant, Maurice Rollinat (George Sand's godson), Laprade, Albert Mérat, Charles Morice and Antony Valabrègue.

Degraël made a neat list of the authors and the references of their borrowings, and travelled back to Paris determined to continue his research the next day at the *Bibliothèque nationale*. But events did not permit

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him to do so. His marching orders awaited him in Paris. He was posted to Compiègne and then found himself—he never grasped why—in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, whence he crossed into Spain and got to England, coming back to France only at the end of 1945. Throughout the War, he carried his list with him and managed by some miracle not to lose it. His research did not progress much, of course, but he did make one discovery of the greatest importance for him. In the British Museum he had had the chance to look up *The Winter Journey* in the *General Catalogue of the French Book Trade* and his formidable theory was confirmed. *The Winter Journey*, by Vernier (Hugo), had indeed been published in 1864, by Hervé Frères, printers and booksellers, at Valenciennes, and as it had been lodged with the copyright office, like all books published in France, it was in the *Bibliothèque nationale* in Paris with the shelfmark Z.87912.

Degraël was appointed to a teaching post in Beauvais and henceforth devoted all his spare time to *The Winter Journey*.

Detailed research into the diaries and letters of most of the poets of the late 19th century easily persuaded Degraël that Hugo Vernier had had in his own time the fame he deserved. Notes like "today received letter from Hugo" or "wrote a long letter to Hugo", "read V.H. all night", or again the famous "Hugo, only Hugo" by Valentin Havercamp referred not a jot or tittle to "Victor" Hugo, but to the jinxed poet whose slim volume had consumed all those who had had it in their hands. Startling contradictions which criticism and literary history had never been able to explain thus found their only logical solution; and it was obviously with reference to Hugo Vernier and to their debt to *The Winter Journey* that Rimbaud wrote "I is another" and Lautréamont "Poetry should be made by all and not by one."

However, as he became more able to illustrate the dominant role that Hugo Vernier was going to have to play in the literary history of the end of the last century, he was less and less able to provide any tangible proof: for he never managed to get hold of another copy of *The Winter Journey*. The one he had read had been destroyed—together with the country house—during the shelling of Le Havre; the copy lodged with the *Bibliothèque nationale* in Paris was not on the shelf when he put in a request slip for it, and after interminable enquiries he learnt that the volume had been sent to a bindery in 1926—but it never arrived at the bindery. All the searches he had made by dozens, nay hundreds of librarians, archivists and bookdealers came to dead ends and Degraël soon believed that the five hundred copies printed had been intentionally destroyed by the very people who had been directly inspired by it.

As for Hugo Vernier's biography, Vincent Degraël managed to learn virtually nothing. An unhoped-for footnote tracked down in an obscure *Biography of Notable Men in Northern France and Belgium* (Verviers, 1882) informed him that Vernier was born at Vimy in the Pas-de-Calais on 3 September 1836. But the registry of the town of Vimy had been burnt in 1916 at the same time as the double copies kept in the county hall at Arras. Apparently, no death certificate had ever been made out.

For more than thirty years, Vincent Degraël struggled in vain to collect proofs of the existence of this poet and of his work. When he died, in the psychiatric hospital at Verrières, some of his former pupils took on the task of sorting the huge pile of documents and manuscripts he left. Among them was a thick ledger bound in black cloth, labelled in careful handwriting, *The Winter Journey*. The first eight pages recounted the story of his fruitless research. The other three hundred and ninety-two pages were blank.

"Le Voyage d'Hiver" © 1985 Estate of Georges Perec
English translation © 1985 David Bellos

Mi-chemin

This is the coming of age of reticence
a new life with another life within it
a blank wall facing on the street
and no one knows what garden or waste may lie behind.
One sees in older men the same kind
of reserve the same silence.
Even in company they drink apart
encased in echoes of their own
older men ambiguous with double meanings
beyond the registration of the young
older men with the resonance of what is old
to make the others wary
but they themselves who do not give it tongue.

François Duchêne

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Norman Podhoretz

The Dialectic of Blame

Some Reflections on Anti-Americanism

PERHAPS the best short summation of the response of the liberal democracies to the threat of totalitarianism is Jean-François Revel's observation that

> "democratic civilisation is the first in history to blame itself because another power is working to destroy it. . . ."

It would be hard to improve on that observation, and I do not propose to try. What I would like to do, however, is point to several remarkable features of the reality that Revel has here encapsulated.

The first is so obvious that we are in danger of overlooking it: not totalitarianism in general but only its Communist variant has had the effect of arousing the self-hatred of the democracies. Nazi totalitarianism, indeed, had the opposite effect. It is true that there were doubts in the 1930s as to whether the democracies were healthy enough to rouse themselves in time to resist and defeat Hitler. But this question of "decadence" had to do with the will to arm, to mobilise, to fight, not with the legitimacy of democratic civilisation itself. Moreover, those in the West who sympathised with Hitler tended to be people who had never reconciled themselves to democratic civilisation in the first place, whether in the political or in the cultural realm.

For a time, these anti-democratic Rightists were in a *de facto* alliance with their anti-democratic counterpart on the Left—an alliance that preceded the Nazi-Soviet pact and may even in some sense be seen as its spiritual or cultural foundation.

"Are you a Communist or a Fascist?" demanded the aristocratic Mitford sisters of a politician who had come to visit. "I am a democrat", he said, to which they responded, "How wet!"

The Mitford sisters, whatever else they may have been, were not wet: at least one was and remained a Communist, and two others were Fascists. If this seems an insufficiently weighty example, I can also cite T. S. Eliot, who could address a fascist sympathiser like Charles Maurras, leader of *Action Française*, as "*Cher maître*", while maintaining warm relations with slightly younger poets like W. H. Auden and Stephen Spender, who were associated with the Communist Party. The differences here in the envisaged solutions were evidently less important to their proponents than their shared view of the problem: and the problem was democratic civilisation as embodied and institutionalised in their own country. Someone like T. S. Eliot may have thought that democracy gave too much power to "the masses", whereas the Communist literati thought (or rather thought they thought) that it gave too little. Whichever, the ineluctable implication was that it did not deserve to survive and was certainly not worth defending.

WE NOW KNOW THAT Hitler, misled by this kind of thing, believed that the democracies would never fight. We also know that he was wrong; and that is my point. The "winds of war" blew all the doubts away. The anti-democratic Right was either converted or silenced; and thanks to Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, the anti-democratic Left (with the exception of a few intellectuals of either Trotskyist or pacifist persuasion) enthusiastically now rallied to the colours. "My Country, Right or Left", said George Orwell, who had never entertained such an idea before; and a good many intellectuals throughout the West, often to their own surprise, were experiencing similar emotions. In America, a young writer named Mary McCarthy, who like Orwell himself had been assuming that the War represented a suicidal conflict between the equally unacceptable alternatives of capitalism and Stalinist "bureaucratic collectivism", suddenly woke one day to the realisation that in her heart she was not neutral, that this was her war, and that she wanted her side, or country, to win. It was only a short step—and for some not even a step was necessary, the two processes occurred simultaneously—from this elemental experience of patriotism, this acknowledgement of one's own stake in one's own country, and the loving embrace of that stake, to a discovery or rediscovery of the ignored or forgotten political values embodied in the countries in question. In a word: democracy. No longer was it "*wet* " to be a democrat. One even gloried in it.

Arthur Koestler, among others, always believed that the alliance between the democracies and Stalin tainted and compromised the struggle against Hitler, turning it into one of grey against black instead of white against black, "a partial truth against a total lie." Solzhenitsyn, going even further, has seen in this alliance a symptom of the West's unwillingness to fight its own battles and a foreshadowing of the loss of courage which he identifies as the root of the contemporary tendency to appease the Soviet Union. Yet it is important to recall that in the period following the defeat of the totalitarian threat from the Right, something approaching a consensus developed in the West on the political need and moral imperative to address the totalitarian threat from the

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Left. Indeed the theory of totalitarianism itself, as developed in systematic terms by a philosopher like Hannah Arendt and in the essays and novels of a writer like Orwell, bespoke a new willingness to identify the Soviet Union politically and morally with Nazi Germany. Like Guy Crouchback, the hero of Evelyn Waugh's trilogy of novels about the War, the theorists of totalitarianism detected, one might say, a profounder and more revealing truth in the Nazi-Soviet pact than in the subsequent war between Hitler and Stalin. In doing this, they helped to heighten an already growing awareness (perhaps not in Evelyn Waugh but in a great many others) that the democracies were the only bulwark of civilisation against this new eruption of barbarism: a system in which the ancient will to absolute or total power had for the first time found the means to realise itself in action.

I DO NOT WISH to exaggerate. There were still those in the West who blamed their own countries, and especially the United States, for the breakup of the wartime alliance with Stalin. There were still millions of apologists for the Soviet Union in the West, operating both within and outside local Communist Parties, who not only portrayed Stalin as the true champion of peace but who continued to insist that the only genuine democracies were the Communist régimes. Yet these millions were consistently overwhelmed at the polls by anti-Communist political parties of the Left as well as of the Right. More surprisingly, their ideological leaders were also being routed, or at least placed on the defensive, in the world of ideas.

In that world, for a brief season, opposition to Communism managed to achieve the same morally obligatory status as had once been enjoyed by opposition to Fascism. It did so, that is, everywhere but in the France of Jean-Paul Sartre; and yet even in Sartre's France the cause of anti-Communism enlisted the support of such literary and intellectual luminaries as Albert Camus, André Malraux, Raymond Aron, and André Gide. In Britain, a socialist intellectual turned politician, R. H. S. Crossman, put together a series of essays by six ex-Communists of varying nationality, including Gide, Koestler, Stephen Spender, Louis Fischer, Richard Wright, and Ignazio Silone, under a title that was to become symbolic of the '50s: *The God That Failed*.[1] In Germany too, socialists like Günter Grass in the literary world and Willy Brandt in the political realm were staunchly and proudly anti-Communist. And in the United States, finally, where only yesterday the world of ideas had been very heavily influenced by the Communists and their sympathisers in the liberal community, the situation was dramatically reversed, with anti-Communist intellectuals like Sidney Hook, Lionel Trilling, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and anti-Communist magazines like *Partisan Review* and *Commentary*, now in the ascendant everywhere in the American political culture.

Whether one believes that ideas are primary, or that they arise to rationalise policies arrived at through other considerations, the fact remains that the decade inaugurated by the enunciation of the "Truman Doctrine" in 1947, which committed the United States to a policy of resisting any further expansion of Soviet power or influence, came to bear a strong political resemblance to the years of the Second World War.

Once again, it was very widely agreed, there was a totalitarian menace abroad in the world, and once again the democracies were the only obstacle to its triumphant spread. As the most powerful of the democracies, the United States found itself with the responsibility for "containing" the spread of this evil force, and the spirit in which it accepted this responsibility was extraordinary for a country with so deep a strain of isolationism in its political culture. Here, for example, is how George F. Kennan concluded the famous article in which he developed the theoretical foundation for the policy of containment:

> "The thoughtful observer of Russian-American relations will find no cause for complaint in the Kremlin's challenge to American society. He will rather experience a certain gratitude for a Providence which, by providing the American people with this implacable challenge, has made their entire security as a nation dependent on their pulling themselves together and accepting the responsibilities of moral and political leadership that history plainly intended them to bear."

Kennan's enthusiasm was not idiosyncratic. Writers who had rarely been heard saying a kind word for America in the past were suddenly transformed into patriots. Thus, we find Mary McCarthy, who had at first affected a neutralist stance even in the war against Hitler, now publishing an article entitled "America the Beautiful." We find *Partisan Review*, whose editorial board had split over the question of American entry into the war againt Hitler, and which had in the past given, as it were, a home to the alienated intellectual, running a symposium with the title '*Our Country and Our Culture*.' In his contribution to that very symposium, the poet Delmore Schwartz held out against the idea that America was now "our country", but only a few years later he too came around. Confronted, he said, "with the specter of the totalitarian state", and "the growing poverty and helplessness of Western Europe", the writer could no longer remain bound to the old tradition of "critical non-conformism." For "America, not Europe, is now the sanctuary of culture: civilization's very existence depends upon America, upon the actuality of American life. . . . To criticise the actuality upon which all hope depends" in the name of an ideal dream "thus becomes a criticism of hope itself."

The question, then, arises: how did we get from there to here?

How did we get from a situation in which the democracies see themselves as charged by Providence with a responsibility to save civilization by resisting the spread of a system representing the Devil himself (the image of "the Devil" was actually used by Crossman), to one in which these very democracies become the first civilisation in history "to blame itself because another power is working to destroy it"? How is

[1] See my essay, Why 'The God that Failed' Failed . . . ." in *Encounter*, January 1983.

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it that the same George Kennan who summoned the United States to a providential conflict with the Soviet Union today attacks the United States for, precisely, "demonizing" the Soviet Union; that the same Willy Brandt who as Mayor of West Berlin became a hero of the resistance to Soviet expansionism today as leader of the Socialist International devotes most of his energy to attacking the United States; that the same Mary McCarthy who celebrated "America the Beautiful" today denounces America for everything from its foreign policy to its cuisine? Delmore Schwartz has long since died, but how is it that many who agreed with him when he said that "civilization's very existence depends upon America" now devote themselves to demonstrating that America is the primary threat to civilization's very existence?

Some would say that this change is merely a rational response to changes in the realities under consideration. As they would have it, thanks to Viet Nam, Watergate, racial violence, persisting poverty and unemployment, and so on, we have come to understand that the United States (and by extension the other democracies with sins of their own to answer for) is not much better than the Soviet Union; perhaps not worse, but certainly not much better, especially now that Stalin and all his "excesses" are gone. Yet the fact is that, by any conceivable measure, the democracies today are more democratic than they were 35 years ago, and while the Soviet Union has become less of a charnel-house than it was under Stalin, it is still by any conceivable measure a totalitarian state.

THEN THERE ARE THOSE who reject this new version of the old theory of convergence so far as the domestic character of the two systems is concerned, but who have resurrected another old theory of Soviet apologetics in their search for a new way of blaming the United States "for the fact that another power is trying to destroy it."

According to this theory, which used to be known as "capitalist encirclement", whenever the Soviet Union behaves in what looks like an aggressive manner, it is actually taking defensive measures against Western hostility in general or some individual provocation in particular. But, of course, this theory is no less absurd than the theory of convergence. Take, for example, its most popular application, the so-called Arms Race. Far from provoking the great Soviet military build-up of the 1970s, the United States during that period—the period of *détente*—was unilaterally cutting back on defence spending. During the same period, when the Soviets sent Cuban surrogates to fight for the Communist side in the civil war in Angola, the US Congress passed a law forbidding the Ford administration to provide aid of any kind, overt or covert, to the pro-Western side in that war. And if, finally, the United States could be accused of provoking the invasion of Afghanistan, it was only by having been weak and irresolute since 1975 in the face of a series of less spectacular Soviet aggressions.

My point in rehearsing these depressingly familiar facts is to demonstrate that there is no *rational* ground for the shift we are trying to explain. Except in so far as their very existence constitutes a threat and a provocation, the democracies are in no way to blame for the fact that the Soviet Union is trying to destroy them. Why, then, do they blame themselves? To answer that question, we need to narrow the focus from totalitarianism in general to Communism in particular.

It has become fashionable of late to proclaim "the death of Communism" as an ideology. No one, it is now said, believes in Communism any longer, not even in the Soviet Union, let alone in East Europe, and still less in the West. No doubt there is an element of truth in this view, and yet I would suggest that it is also extremely misleading. Communism as embodied in the Soviet Union has certainly lost the appeal it once enjoyed; but, as we have just seen, this has by no means spelled an end to apologetics for the Soviet Union in the West. Moreover, Communist revolutionaries and Communist régimes in the Third World continue to enjoy support and to be given the benefit of every conceivable doubt. No amount of experience seems able to kill the dream of Communism with a human face—if not in the Soviet Union, then in China; if not there, then in Viet Nam; if not there, then in Cuba; if not there, then in Nicaragua—and so on, into the totalitarian night.

To the liberal culture of the democracies, built as they are on the idea of human perfectibility, the utopian vision represented by this dream is a standing temptation. Under certain circumstances it can be conquered, as it was in the post-War period, but it always seems to return; and if it can find no satisfactory outlet such as was provided by the Soviet Union in the days when it was still possible to blind oneself to the horrible truths about the "worker's paradise", it turns inward in search of a negative outlet. Thus it is that hatred of America has come to play much the same role as love of the Soviet Union once did. America, and the liberal civilisation for which it stands, is hated for failing to satisfy the utopian greed that Communism has excited and that has survived the alleged "death" of Communism itself.

THERE IS NO EASY ANSWER to this problem, and there is no political answer at all. Yet for those of us who understand what is at stake here, an imperative arises that we have no right to deny or evade. The imperative is to throw ourselves enthusiastically and without reservation into the work of explicating and proclaiming the virtues and values of democratic civilisation: not defensively but aggressively, not in a spirit of apology but in a spirit of celebration. The living actuality we are called upon to celebrate has for so long been denigrated and defamed in the name of a utopian dream that its blessings have quite literally become invisible to millions who share in them from day to day. I do not claim that we have the power to make them immediately visible once again, but I do say that we have a duty to try. Beginning now; beginning today.

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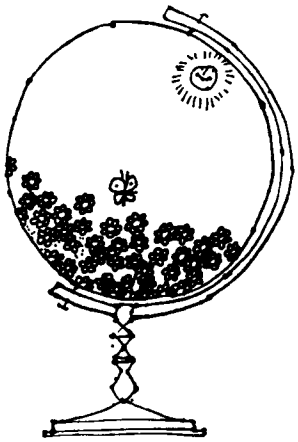
Hugh Seton-Watson

What is Europe, Where is Europe?

From Mystique to Politique



THE WAY IN WHICH I have phrased my title is derived from a famous statement by Charles Péguy: "*Tout commence par la mystique, et finit par la politique.*" These words are virtually untranslatable, but perhaps a fair paraphrase would be: Every great enterprise starts off with enthusiasm for an exalted aim, and ends up by being bogged down in petty politics.

How far does Péguy's proposition apply to what has been called "the European idea" or "the idea of Europe"? Let me first look to the *mystique*.

The word "Europe" has been used and misused, interpreted and misinterpreted, in as many different meanings as almost any word in any language. There have been and are many Europes: the Europe of Greek mythology; the Europe of the geographers—the two extreme western peninsulas of the Asian land mass; the Europe of the Carolingian empire and its successor the EEC; the Europe of Byzantium; industrial Europe and agrarian Europe; "capitalist" Europe and "socialist" Europe; the Europe of the great powers and the Europe of Woodrow Wilsonian self-determination; the Europe of self-styled national states and of disaffected national minorities. That is not an exhaustive list.

Nearly all these Europes that I have mentioned come from the past, and some from the very distant past; but all to some extent belong also to the present. I must frankly admit my conviction—based on over 50 years of efforts to understand both numerous periods of history, and current politics as I have lived through them—that past and present are inextricably intermixed; and I make no apology for jumping to and fro in time in what I have to say.

Europe is more than a geographical expression. The growth of an increasingly homogeneous European culture, and also a belief among thinking men and women that they belong to a single, even if diverse, European cultural community, are facts of history and facts of this present time. The notion of an European cultural community, allegiance to which transcended, but did not normally contradict allegiance to a more precise regional or national sovereignty, is derived, I think, from an earlier allegiance to Christendom, and this in turn has its antecedents. Let me look briefly at these.

The notion of Christendom—a community of peoples, and a geographical area, as distinct from "Christianity" which is a religious faith, or a variety of faiths of a common origin—goes back to the grant by Emperor Constantine to Christians of equal rights with other religions, which developed into an exclusive status for Christianity as the religion of the empire. Thereafter the Roman Empire was the land of the true faith, and the outside world was the land of infidels. This dichotomy became still sharper after the Muslim conquests of the 7th century, when Christendom became almost confined to Europe—and not all Europe, since it lost most of Spain for more than 500 years; and before Spain had been recovered, most of Russia, all the Balkans and the remnant of Asia Minor had been lost. The allegiance to Christendom as a higher ideal transcending narrower territorial and feudal loyalties was maintained by the reality of conflict, on sea and land, with Islam. It inspired the Crusades, which were of course also motivated by all sorts of ambitions, political intrigues, and lust for plunder. Its equivalent was the Muslim division of the world into the House of Islam and the House of War which—similarly combined with ambitions, intrigues and lust for plunder—inspired the numerous Arab or Tatar or Ottoman invasions of Europe, the last being the 1683 Siege of

THIS IS THE LAST *article from our long-time contributor—we published a piece by him in the first issue of* ENCOUNTER *(October 1953). G. H. N. Seton-Watson, Emeritus Professor of Russian History, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, died unexpectedly in Washington D.C. on 19 December 1984. His passing was a great loss to historical studies; he was the recognised doyen of East European scholarship, following in the footsteps of his father, R. W. Seton-Watson, a distinguished writer in the same field. Among Hugh Seton-Watson's books were: "Decline of Imperial Russia" (Westview Press, 1984), "Imperialist Revolutionaries" (Hutchinson, 1980), "Nations and States" (Methuen, 1977), and "The Russian Empire, 1801-1917" (1967). In a recent issue of* ENCOUNTER *(February 1985), George Schöpflin discussed Professor Seton-Watson's famous analysis of "the Iron Curtain" in his "The East European Revolution" (Methuen, 1956).*

This article is based on the text of the 11th Martin Wight Memorial Lecture which he had prepared to give in London on 23 April 1985 at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. It was read on that occasion by Dominic Lieven. Hugh Seton-Watson's death has robbed European studies of one of its wisest and most vigorous personalities, at once detached scholar and involved publicist.

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Vienna, after which there was a rapid decline in the fear of Islam and in the lip-service paid by monarchs to the defence of Christendom.

The dichotomy between Christendom and infidel was thus a reality for more than a millennium. But it too was related to something still more ancient, which we are too often inclined to forget in thinking about the origins of Europe. This is the dichotomy between civilised world and barbarians. At the other end of the world the Chinese have long thought in these terms, but their concepts and ours hardly touched each other before the 19th century. In our part of the world this dichotomy was first clearly expressed in the two familiar contrasts of Jew and Gentile and of Hellene and barbarian. The Jews were a small compact community with their own territory, something not so very different from the modern concept of a nation. But the Hellenes were divided between dozens of sovereignties, little states which fought each other, often savagely. Nevertheless they were aware of being Hellenes and as such different from barbarians. The notion of barbarian soon came to mean not only people of foreign land and foreign speech, but also people living at a lower level of humanity, what we today would call "uncivilised." This was how the Hellenes, and at a later period the Romans, heirs to Hellas, saw it. Today we may perhaps dispute their judgment: the greatest adversaries of Hellas, and later of Rome, the Persians, were certainly not uncivilised, and I suspect that the debt to them of Rome, and of ourselves as descendants of Rome, may be quite considerable.

The two dichotomies—civilisation and barbarism, and true faith and infidel—were fused in the later Roman Empire. The one word which combined true faith with civilisation was "Christendom." The Roman Empire disappeared, the barbarian Teutons and Slavs were brought into the true faith, and Christendom became coextensive with Europe—a geographical, not a cultural term. Across the Mediterranean a new religion and a new civilisation flourished. Neither the Muslim world of the Abbasids nor the Europe of Charlemagne or Empress Irene was uncivilised, but this did not stop fanatics on either side from seeing them as such. And the general public image, or traditional stereotype, which emerged through the centuries was closer to the outlook of the fanatics than of the enlightened few on either side.

ALREADY AT THE DAWN of the Middle Ages a division, more important than the boundaries of local sovereignties, was beginning to appear within Christendom. Rome became a provincial city, while Constantinople remained the centre of a still powerful empire and of a sophisticated system of government, and the seat of a Patriarch whose missionaries went out to convert numerous pagan peoples, meeting and competing with the emissaries of the Bishop of Rome.

The contrast between Rome and Constantinople was deepened when a Pope crowned Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day 800 AD. The authority of this revived Empire received at least verbal recognition from rulers in an area of western Europe, whose boundaries coincided to a remarkable extent with those of the original EEC. Doctrinal disagreements between the two Churches grew fiercer, and led in the 11th century to a rejection by Constantinople of the supremacy of Rome. Since then we have had a Roman Catholic Church and an Orthodox Church, hierarchically and dogmatically separate from each other. Even so, the notion of a single common Christendom survived, and was perhaps increased by the common experience of the early Crusades. It took a very heavy blow in the so-called Fourth Crusade of 1204, which consisted of the seizure of Constantinople by the western Crusaders at the instigation of the Venetians. This crime created a profound distrust of the West by the Greeks, traces of which have survived to the present day.

Still more important, I think, were two great conquests of European lands from the east: first, of Russia by the Mongols, whose successors the Tatar Khans became Muslim, and second, of the Orthodox Slav states of the Balkans, and of Constantinople itself, by the Ottoman Turks. For roughly 200 years, from 1250 to 1450, the frontier of the lands of civilisation and the true faith lay along the eastern borders of Poland and the north of what is today Romania, and for the next 250 years the frontier swung round westwards through Hungary and down to the Adriatic. Beyond this line, to east and south, were infidels and barbarians. Beyond it also were Christians, but these were almost all Orthodox, not Catholic; and so the rulers and thinkers of unconquered Christendom gradually, if not explicitly at least implicitly, wrote them off. Christendom became coextensive with Catholic Europe west of the Tatar and Ottoman borders.

The Balkan Orthodox mostly remained under the Turks for 400 years, but the Russians re-emerged sooner. Already in the 16th century there was a Principality of Moscow which was rapidly growing into a serious military power. The Poles, accustomed to see their border as the border of Christendom, found it difficult to see in the Muscovites fellow-members of Christendom. In the Polish view of Russians even today, apart from the traditional hostility to dangerous neighbours and long memories of injustice and suffering in the past 200 years, there remains, I think, an element of contempt for the barbarian which goes back to a more distant past. There is something there which is not present in the long historical rivalries of western peoples, French and Germans, French and English, even English and Scots.

Equally important, and less appreciated, is how the Muscovites then saw the rest of the world. In the Orthodox view, the Catholics were schismatics who had seceded from the true faith—and of course the Protestants after the Reformation were schismatics from schismatics. Once Muscovy had shaken off the Tatar yoke, its ruler—Great Prince, later Czar (a Slavisation of the word Caesar)—was the only independent Orthodox ruler in the world, which meant the only truly Christian ruler. Christendom, the land ruled by a Christian monarch, *was* Muscovy: nothing else was. Muscovy faced to the west and north the schismatics whose vanguards were the Romanist Poles and the Protestant Swedes; and in the east and south the infidels—Tatars and Ottomans.

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In the 17th and still more in the 18th centuries the idea of Europe began to replace the idea of Christendom in the west. This was the result of various processes which made themselves felt at the end of the Middle Ages: the rise of secular sovereign states, expansion across the oceans, scientific discoveries, and above all the religious wars of the Reformation, which tore Christendom to pieces and created in thinking minds a profound disillusionment with the idea that religion could be the main unifying force in human communities.

The overarching unity of medieval Christendom had been expressed in the basic similarity, side by side with regional variety, of religious painting, church architecture, and literature in the common Latin language. In the secularising Europe of the 18th century, styles of painting and architecture were no less interrelated; this was still more true of the flowering art of music; and though the growing secular literature was expressed in diverse languages, its content was increasingly similar from country to country. This new secular European culture began to get a hold on the minds not just of a tiny vanguard of advanced thinkers, scholars and jurists, but of a much wider educated class, not excluding rulers and their officials.

If Europe was replacing Christendom in both Catholic and Protestant lands, this was not at first visible in Russia. Muscovy was coextensive with Christendom, and Europe was something foreign and odious, dominated by Romano-German schism. Certainly there were individual Russians to whom Polish, Swedish, or German models were attractive, and such influences were not unknown at the court of Czar Aleksei Mikhailovich (1645-76); but they were very much a minor trend. This changed with the advent of Peter the Great. Though the effectiveness of his policies is arguable, and his motivation debatable, his reign was still a turning-point and he is assured of his place in history as the great prototype of the artificial moderniser of the underdeveloped society: the number of his would-be imitators in the 20th century is legion. The myth of Peter, the creation of the new capital, and the symbolism of Pushkin's great poem "The Bronze Horseman" have done their work in human history, and are doing it still, and no amount of burrowing by irreverent historians into the history of the real Peter will undo it, for better or worse.

Peter decided that Russia must become part of Europe, and his successors never abandoned that purpose, even if they ignored or reversed some of his policies. The Russian élite succumbed to the charms of secular European culture and of the French language. The Russian court modelled itself on European courts, the Russian dynasty intermarried with European dynasties and was welcomed by them. More important, Russian armies proved a match for the best European armies. Apraksin entered Berlin in 1760, and Suvorov beat armies of the French Revolution on Italian soil in 1799.

The age of St Petersburg, from 1702 to 1918, was the age of Russian membership of Europe, but it had its limitations. The growth of European unity in the 18th century was shaken by the first of the three great modern European civil wars, from 1793 to 1815, which Russia did little to bring about, but from which Russia was one of the chief sufferers. The invading army of Napoleon, which included contingents from most parts of Europe, aroused in the whole Russian people an implacable patriotic resistance, in which priests and peasants saw the enemy as the hordes of Antichrist, and many more sophisticated Russians descried the forces of Romano-Germanic schismatic Europe, spearheaded once more by Poles (Napoleon had about 90,000 Polish soldiers, one in seven in his total). Nevertheless, after it was over, Europeanisation became once more the aim both of Czars and of the social élite, although different schools of thought in Russia looked to different Europes, from the Prussia of Frederick II to the England of Gladstone or to the France of the Paris Commune. And below the educated élite—no less European than the French or German of its day—the cultural permafrost in which the peasantry was buried remained.

And now we come to the successive paradoxes of my parents' lifetime and my own. The cultural unity of Europe, the allegiance of educated persons all over this continent to an overarching idea of Europe, grew all through the 19th century, and especially in its last decades and in the first of this century. And side by side with it grew its negation: healthy natural devotion to individual national cultures, variant flowerings of an overall European culture, became perverted into nationalist fanaticisms; defence and self-defence of the disinherited and the oppressed became perverted into the fanaticism of unlimited class hatred; and boredom with routines of civilian life and yearning for the heroic was perverted into dreams of purifying blood-baths. And the dreams came true; nightmares were surpassed by real life. And the nightmares are still with us.

Russia, as a European great power, made its contribution to the launching of the second great European civil war, but was its chief victim. Russia's was not the highest casualty rate: that was the fate of Serbia, which lost a quarter of its population. But the successive disasters of war, civil war, famine, more famine and purges which overtook Russia surely surpass the record of any other country in modern times. Perhaps China could compete in ghastly rivalry.

And here is the paradox most relevant to my theme. The revolution made by one small political party against the parties which thought they had taken power when Czardom collapsed in war, was made in the name of what was then thought to be the most progressive body of thought in modern Europe—revolutionary Marxist socialism. But the effect of the Bolshevik victory was to destroy or drive into exile the greater part of the Europeanised section of Russian society—at least a million people. It is true that the Bolshevik party itself contained Europeanised Russians, not least Lenin himself, and that others found scope for their talents in the service of the new Soviet régime. But these survivors did not last long; Stalin's purge in the 1930s finished them off, and political mores returned to the age of the Tatar yoke.

The transfer of the Bolshevik capital from St Petersburg back to Moscow had a perfectly practical immediate cause: the old capital was further away from the enemy, an essential

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point in 1918. However, it proved to be highly symbolic. Bolshevism turned its back on Europe. This of course is not how Soviet Communists see it. Russia, they would argue, belongs to Europe no less than it ever did, but this is for them of minor importance. The division that matters today is not between Europe and the rest of the world, but between socialism and capitalism. The Soviet Union is the leader of the forces of socialism, which are destined to prevail for the whole human race. The world is divided into two camps. On the one hand are the lands of socialism, or those struggling to build socialism. On the other hand there are three types: the capitalist countries; the developing countries in different degrees of dependence on the capitalists, varying from neo-colonial subjection to relative independence; and finally the countries ruled by renegades from socialism who falsely claim to be true socialists.

Now this picture does to some extent correspond to the reality of today—even if we may reject the labels which Soviet spokesmen would attach to us—and it is different from the past. Nevertheless, there is a remarkable similarity to an earlier stage of Russian history, that of 16th-century Muscovy under Ivan the Terrible. Then Muscovy was considered to be the only land with a Christian ruler. Muscovy *was* Christendom. It faced a hostile world, on the one hand schismatic Romano-German Europe, on the other hand the infidels. Today the Soviet Union is the land of socialism. Socialism *is* the Soviet system; no other system is. Some of the neighbours of the Soviet Union, and a few more distant lands, under Soviet tutelage, have made great progress towards socialism, but still lag behind the Soviet model. The outside world is hostile. On the one hand are the infidel exponents of unregenerate capitalism. On the other hand is the realm of the renegades to socialism, the Chinese Maoists. The main difference between the situation of the Soviet Union today and of Muscovy then is that then the schismatics were in the west and the infidels in the east, and today the positions are reversed.

Does a belief in the existence of a single European culture require the creation of a single European state, or federation of states? This was not the expectation of European intellectuals of the 18th and 19th centuries. After 1918, in the search by thinking minds for drastic measures to prevent a repetition of the recent blood-bath, a few voices were heard in favour of abolition of state sovereignty. But this was not prevalent in the heyday of the League of Nations, of Briand and Stresemann, whose outlook could well have been described by the slogan of a later generation: "*l'Europe des patries*." In the 1930s, of course, Europeanism of any sort became remote. In the mid-1940s, during the third and worst European civil war, which was also truly a world war, the only unity offered to Europeans had as its spokesman Dr Joseph Goebbels and his weekly paper with cultural pretensions, *Das Reich*, to some extent an echo of the mythology of European unity favoured by Napoleon Bonaparte, and directed against the same two powers at opposite margins of the continent, Britain and Russia.

In the movement for greater European unity which developed after 1945, the nostalgic memory of a lost cultural unity was certainly a factor, but it was less prominent than a number of others which must be briefly mentioned.

One was the awareness of a common peril. Europe was threatened by Soviet power, as Christendom had once been threatened by Muslim power, first Arab then Turkish. One European, or partly European, power controlled half the continent beyond its borders, and the rest was in no position to resist its pressures from its own resources. It was not a question of an imminent danger of a Soviet military advance to the Atlantic. Rather, the danger came from economic exhaustion in Britain, internal disruption in France and Italy by indigenous forces linked to the Soviet Union, and the complete collapse and destitution of Germany. This rather complex but urgent danger was well understood by some Western statesmen, especially by Ernest Bevin and Dean Acheson. Together, in the face of great obstacles, not least from within their own countries, they set in motion the reconstruction of the economy of Western Europe. Then, political leaders began to think of ways of getting Europeans not only to live beside each other but to work together.

A second force was the reaction of millions of Europeans against the destructive nationalism of the Age of Fascism. This was especially evident among French and Germans. The mutual fear and bitterness between these two had threatened the peace of Europe for hundreds of years, and especially for the last 80, and had greatly contributed to the making of both world wars. In the second of these both French and Germans had been utterly crushed and humiliated. As they scrambled painfully out of the pit, some of them resolved to put an end to this sterile enmity, and in the next two decades this aim was largely achieved. This has been seen by some British commentators as a misfortune for Britain, and the two men who did most to bring it about, General de Gaulle and Dr Konrad Adenauer, as unfriendly to this country. For my own part, I can only say that, having grown up in a time when reconciliation between these two great nations was more desirable, and more unattainable, than almost anything, I watched the process with joy, and remain moved by the result, and do not believe that it can be to Britain's disadvantage.

The reaction against nationalism went naturally together with the notion of European solidarity. Especially for the defeated Germans and Italians Europe was a replacement for the fatherland, the claims of which had been so long and so monstrously exploited and perverted by Hitler and Mussolini. A similar tendency was also to be seen further east, especially perhaps among Austrians, Czechs, and Hungarians. In the last two decades there has, I think, been some change. Generations born since the War have to some extent re-discovered a pride in and a devotion to their own national sub-cultures, without the xenophobia and arrogance of the Age of Fascism. My impression is that this is true of Germans and Italians, and certainly of Poles, Romanians, and Hungarians. I would not, of course, claim that xenophobia has disappeared in those lands, but it seems to me it is far less than when I first visited them, and in general that the national patriotism of today is blended with European conscious-

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ness in a way that was not visible in the 1930s.

The French case is rather special. A sceptic may suggest that French enthusiasm for Europe is to some extent based on an identification of Europe with France, that European culture is French culture, that the appropriate language of European discourse is French, and that the horrid patois of the Anglo-Saxons should be banished. There is something in this, but we must not exaggerate.

A THIRD FORCE which needs mention is American pressure for European unity. Certain deeply rooted American myths have to be borne in mind. There is the contrast between the numerous squabbling nations of Europe, with their endless entangling alliances and counter-alliances, and the great peaceful American nation, spread across a land about the size of the whole of Europe (including Russia to the Urals). It is true that America experienced a fairly frightful war 120 years ago with half a million dead, but it ended in victory for unity, and the generosity of victors to vanquished ensures, so it is said, peaceful progress ever since. The secret of all this progress was the federal Constitution, strong enough and flexible enough to hold this great nation together already for almost 200 years. Why then can't the Europeans federate?

This, of course, has never been an official American demand, and the makers of American foreign policy have mostly known too much about Europe to think like this. But millions of Americans have thought and still do think this way, and a few words of explanation of the differences between Europe and America may be useful.

The American republic was populated from the beginning predominantly by people of one language—English—derived from mainly one country. Europe by contrast is the home of something like 50 language-groups which have existed as compact entities for a millennium or longer. Secondly, America was an almost empty land, full of splendid resources, and the Americans became, in David Potter's memorable phrase, a people of plenty. Europe, too, was and is extremely rich in resources, but they were divided between the numerous peoples: there has never been a time, as there was in American history, when this rich continent lay open to occupation and development by a newly arrived people. Thirdly, though the immigration of the 19th and 20th centuries brought the United States millions of new citizens, at any particular moment the immigrants were but a small proportion of the total population. Uprooted from their homelands, they arrived in a country which already had its predominant language, its constitution, and its culture. They were also eager to be absorbed in this new culture, and if they themselves found it difficult, their children achieved it. In Europe, their kinsmen lived in solid compact populations in lands in which their ancestors had lived for generations or centuries, were attached to their distinct sub-cultures, and were being urged, by their politically conscious educated élites, to think of themselves as nations. Attempts either by pre-nationalist dynastic régimes or by proselytising alien nationalist rulers to suppress their growing national consciousness caused them to follow extreme nationalist movements among their own peoples, and this contributed as much as any other single cause to the unleashing of two world wars.

These differences between the American and European historical and social realities made the simple application of American federalist formulae to Europe quite unreal. But American exhortations to Europeans to unite undoubtedly had their effects.

LASTLY I MENTION the economic forces, for the creation of a West European common market, not because I think them less important than the forces which I have mentioned, but partly because my own economic knowledge is minimal, and still more because they are rather well known, and are constantly in the public mind, whereas the things which I have been stressing seem to me often to be forgotten. Moreover, it is, I think, true that the motives of the founding fathers of the EEC were not primarily economic, but that it seemed to them—no doubt rightly—that initial progress would come more easily and quickly in the economic than in other fields.

I COME NOW to the question: what connection is there, or should there be, between a movement for European economic and political unity, and a sense of a European cultural community? The second can exist without the first: it did for more than 200 years. Can the first exist without the second? It can, but at great cost, and perhaps not for very long. Let us not underrate the need for a positive common cause, for something more exciting than the price of butter, more constructive than the allocation of defence contracts, a need for an European *mystique*. This was understood by the founders of the EEC, men well aware of the European cultural heritage, deeply marked by it. But when a *mystique* gets into the hands of bureaucrats, there is apt to be trouble. Remember Péguy's aphorism, "*Tout commence par la mystique, et finit par la politique.*" The Brussels Eurocrats' *politique* may have much to be said for it, but it is a long way away from the *mystique* of Europe. The basic EEC territory was the former Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne: even the border between Federal Republic and *DDR* is not very different from the line of Charlemagne's advance into Germany. Gradually this neo-Carolingian empire has been extended, but with increasing pontifications as each new recruit was added.

Europe, whether it be a geographical, a cultural or a moral concept, has never been, and is not now, coterminous with the Carolingian empire. Attitudes to the concept of Europe today have striking similarities to those of the distant past. In particular, the two dichotomies of lands of civilisation and barbarism, and lands of the true believers and the infidels, reappear under new names on both sides of the Lübeck-Trieste line.

Of the dichotomies as seen from the Soviet side, and of the strange similarities in the Muscovite "*mentalités*" of late 20th and late 16th centuries, I have already spoken. The two dichotomies apply also, though in different form, on the western side of the line. The spokesmen of the EEC and

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NATO readily seek to appropriate the mystique of Europe, implying, even if not categorically asserting, that those beyond the line are sunk in a lower level of civilisation, in fact in barbarism. They also see something which they call alternately "the West" or "Europe" as the protagonist of a true faith which most of them publicly identify with an abstraction called "Western democracy", while some still think in terms of the older contrast between Christendom and infidel or heathen. Their attitude recalls that of the leaders of late medieval and early modern Christendom who increasingly and implicitly wrote off the Christians living under Muslim rule.

But the truth is that nowhere in the world is there so widespread a belief in the reality, and the importance, of an European cultural community, as in the countries lying between EEC territory and the Soviet Union. It is true that this belief is complicated by political considerations. The peoples of this region feel a certain resentment against the West Europeans for having done, as they see, it, so little to help them; and at the same time, in terms of world power, they see the counterweight to their own imperial master not in Western Europe but in the United States. It might be argued that what they long for is membership of a Western community rather than of a European community. But these two concepts overlap in their imaginations, and the cultural community which they remember, or their parents remember and have told them of, is essentially European.

To these peoples the idea of Europe is of a community of cultures to which the specific culture, or subculture, of each belongs. None of them can survive without Europe, or Europe without them. This is of course a myth—by which I mean a sort of chemical compound of truth and fantasy. The absurdities of the fantasy need not obscure the truth; and whether admirable or not, any complex of ideas which gets a powerful hold over whole peoples is historically and politically important. Every modern nation has its historical mythology—including even the English, even if the most sophisticated among them turn their backs on it. For the western colonial subjects of the Soviet empire an historical mythology of Europe is added to their own individual national historical mythologies.

HOW MANY OF THEM bother about these things? A minority of the population of course, but a much higher proportion than among Western peoples whose national culture and identity has not been in danger for centuries. A large minority care deeply, and this includes working men and women in factory and field; and even of the majority, ill-fed peasants and all, I should hesitate to assume that allegiance, either to their own nation or to Europe, is meaningless. "The masses care for none of these silly ideas, only for material interests" (the comfortable patronising cliché of progressive intellectuals) may or may not be true in England or Sweden. Maybe if it were universally true, the world would be a more comfortable place. But it is not, and least of all in the eastern half of Europe. The division of Europe, and the forcible subjection of their national cultures to manipulation by conquerors whom they despise, is something to which they will not in the predictable future reconcile themselves.

MY LAST SENTENCE probably suffices to damn me in many minds as "a cold warrior." But all that I have done is to state in simple words the basic fact of which 40 years of study have convinced me. Yet such has been the impact of propaganda, counter-propaganda, and disinformation that in the minds of hundreds of thousands of enlightened Western men and women, firmly devoted to freedom in their own countries, the present division of Europe has acquired a sanctity which they will fanatically justify; and to say that this division is permanently unacceptable for more than a hundred million Europeans, and will not last, is seen by them as tantamount to preaching nuclear war.

Now it is true that the emergence of Europe from the political ice-age associated with the names of Metternich and Czar Nicholas I was brought about not by revolutions (all revolutions of those years were crushed, just as all four revolutions since 1945 have been crushed), but by a series of what we may perhaps call medium-sized wars; and that the emergence of the new states in Eastern Europe was a result of a world war. It is also true that in the nuclear age, medium-sized wars in Europe are virtually inconceivable, and that a nuclear world war, whatever it did, would not liberate and reunite Europe. But do these truths give permanence and sanctity to today's division? There is just one statement that historians can safely make about history: that in history nothing is permanent. How change will come, historians are poorly qualified to predict: those who have tried have not added to human wisdom.

Let us stop thinking of the Soviet colonial empire as permanent, and stop speaking of the EEC's neo-Carolingian empire as Europe. There is nothing warmongering or sacrilegious about these small changes in vocabulary.

THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL COMMUNITY includes the peoples living beyond Germany and Italy; and this is something which we should never forget, something in no way annulled by the fact that they cannot today belong to an all-European economic or political community. This is all the more reason for promoting, and for making the best possible use of, every sort of cultural contact with them that offers itself, and to show constantly that we recognise them as fellow-Europeans.

But do the British belong too? The belief that Britain has turned its back on Europe ever since the beginning of the British overseas empire, is widely accepted both within and outside Britain, but is at most a half-truth. It is easily forgotten that the English came rather late to overseas expansion, arriving after the Portuguese, Spaniards, and Dutch, and about the same time as the French. All these had strong links overseas, yet all took part in the cultural and scientific trends, as well as in the political and military conflicts of Europe, and so did the English, not to mention the Scots, Irish, and Welsh.

While the metropolitan countries continued to be involved

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in Europe, from the overseas communities there emerged, in some cases through wars of independence and in others by mutual agreement, new states and new nations. Between the new states and the old not only trade but cultural links persisted, and are still strong. However, certain differences should be noted. Firstly, the total population of both France and the Netherlands is larger than that of persons overseas whose mother tongue is French or Dutch, whereas in the case of Portugal, Spain, and Britain the reverse is true. Secondly, whereas the numerous Spanish-speaking nations with few exceptions remain economically undeveloped, and all of them, as also the sole overseas Portuguese-speaking nation, are militarily weak, in the case of the English-speaking nations the reverse is true. Canada, New Zealand and Australia are advanced industrial urbanised states, and the United States is both economically and militarily the most powerful state in the world. If, then, the English have since the late 19th century been drawn away from Europe more than other nations of the west coast of the continent, this is because of the peculiar character of membership of the English-speaking world.

Not so long ago, it used to be argued that, for the British, membership of the Commonwealth was more important than membership of Europe. But though there are of course still many links with the former colonies, the expectation that the Commonwealth would be a significant political unit has been proved to be fantasy. What has remained a reality is the English-speaking world, consisting of the United States, Britain, and three of the Old Dominions. When de Gaulle inveighed against "*les anglo-saxons*", he was speaking of something real. I do not see how any citizen of this country, who knows something of international affairs and is concerned for the future of Britain can doubt that Britain belongs both to Europe and to the English-speaking world. For my own part, I know that my roots are in both, that I cannot give up either, that I cannot cut my mind or brain in two. The task that has lain before the British for the last three decades, and which regrettably their rulers have not discharged, is to be a strong binding force between the two, not to stand shivering on the brink of the Channel and the Atlantic, sneering in turn at those on each of the opposite shores, indulging alternately in self-reproach and self-pity, doomed to the fate of the donkey which could not decide from which pile of hay to eat, ending up as prey for carrion-feeders.

There is not much sign at present of an awareness of a European cultural heritage, a *mystique* of Europe, in Britain, or of any effort on the part of any political or cultural authorities to develop one. This may be partly due to the prevalence in a large part of our cultural élite of a hangover from empire in the form of a guilt-complex towards the peoples of Asia and Africa. For a long time the word "European" was associated with arrogant assertions of cultural, and racial, superiority. But if "Europe" is associated with this arrogance in Asian and African minds, does this mean that Europeans should reject their own heritage? And if the history, arts, and literature of Europe are richer than those of sub-Saharan Africa, do we have to pretend it is not so? Can we not simply study honestly the African cultures, and help Africans to study their own? This I know well has been the practice in some parts at least of the British academic world, and one must hope that it will develop further. But it need not cause the British intelligentsia to shudder with guilt at the thought that the British is one sub-culture of a European cultural community.

THIS BRINGS ME to another confused but important question, the cultural relationship between Europe and America. "European culture" is often said to be under attack from "American mass culture." It is easy enough to see what is meant by this, but rather difficult to formulate it in words. Could one say that contemporary mass culture is based on an ethos of short-term material hedonism: that the overriding purpose of all human endeavour should be to maximise material comfort? The larger the number for whom comfort is provided, the larger will be the profit for those who provide the relevant goods and services. Commercial profitability and mass consumer satisfaction go together. The best brief label for this that I know was designed by someone for whose memory I have little affection, but who was always better at words than deeds: Mussolini. His phrase was "pluto-democracy."

It is not my aim now either to denounce or to defend a culture or a society dominated by these principles, the practical results of which we all enjoy in our daily lives. The question which does concern me is, "Is this culture specifically American?" I think only to a rather small extent. It is American in so far as the United States is the most populous society of mass culture, and the first society to achieve it. The reasons for this lie in its history: partly in the great natural wealth of North America which the pioneers and subsequent immigrants had the great good luck to find there; and partly in the fact that the American republic was founded and developed by men consciously striving to create a new society and a new social ethos, no longer limited by traditional obligations and hierarchies. In Europe until about the middle of this century the commercial-hedonist values of capitalism had not won complete victory over the earlier values of service to the state, of classical humanism and of the City of God, whose origins go back through the Renaissance to the Middle Ages. In Europe the public ethos was an amalgam of these values, piled up on top of each other through the centuries, the relative strength of each constituent varying from country to country. This was especially true of the country which was the pioneer of capitalist enterprise, and also the country from which the ancestors of the American founding fathers had come, England.

But we would be wrong to see this contrast in absolute terms. The influence of the old traditions of Christianity, of Enlightenment and even of State service, were present in the minds of the Founding Fathers, and their influence can be traced in American history. Equally, the desire for material comfort was present in the minds of European men and women, and became a force as soon as most people began to feel that they could, or that they were entitled to, ask for a

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better life. This of course is neither a quick nor a simple process: it does not follow immediately from the introduction of universal suffrage, or the secret ballot, or even proportional representation. But by the 1960s it had become pretty widespread in Western Europe, enormously accelerated by television; and it had gone a long way in Eastern Europe too, and even in Russia itself, where material hedonism is in theory part of official doctrine, but long-term rather than short-term ("jam tomorrow"), and inhibited by politically-motivated economic scarcity and by well-organised coercion; and even in the Third World it had spread at least to a large part of the urban population. Consumerism, then, is not something inherently American. It is useless, as well as unhistorical, to make America the scapegoat for our troubled feelings. In so far as consumerism threatens the older values of what we may think of as European culture, this threat comes primarily not from America (even if some of its wares have American labels) but from within European society, and indeed from within the minds of almost all of us. The existence of consumerism does not prove the irrelevance of European culture; if European culture is a reality, it can accommodate consumerism, can come to terms with it as it has come to terms with more than one preceding ethos.

One final point I must make. I argued that the European idea replaced the idea of Christendom largely as a result of disillusionment with religious persecutions and wars. But this does not mean that religion ceased to be an important force in Europe, or that those who believed in a European cultural community did not believe in Christianity. Far from it. Christendom, the area within which Christianity has its believers, is world-wide, no longer coextensive with Europe. In today's world, allegiance to Christendom, the land of the true faith, can have no meaning. But Christianity is a powerful force still in Western Europe, and still more so in Eastern Europe. Any intelligent reader of the daily press must be aware of the strength of the Catholic Church in Poland. More difficult to estimate is the undoubted survival, inward renewal and expansion of the Orthodox Church in Russia.

The interweaving of the notions of Europe and of Christendom is a fact of history which even the most brilliant sophistry cannot undo. But it is no less true that there are strands in European culture which are not Christian: the Roman, the Hellenic, arguably the Persian, and (in modern centuries) the Jewish. Whether there is also a Muslim strand is more difficult to say. Medieval Muslim Spain was a channel by which European classical learning passed, through Romance versions of Arabic translations of Greek texts, into Western Europe. In the age of Ottoman greatness and decline cultural interchange was less evident than commercial or military. In Europe today, even leaving out European Russia, there are many million Muslims, living in lands where many generations of their ancestors have lived. Modern Turks, of whom five million live in geographical Europe, and two million Bosnian Muslims in Yugoslavia certainly feel themselves Europeans, accept the European heritage as theirs. Whether this is true of the four million Albanians, with the highest birth rate in Europe, I would not risk a guess, still less of Muslim *Gastarbeiter* or immigrants from overseas. The apparently growing upsurge of Muslim militancy, in Muslim lands from Morocco to Malaysia, is perhaps above all anti-modernising and anti-secular, but that it contains both anti-Christian and anti-European elements can hardly be questioned.

However we may estimate the Muslim contribution, it is clear that the main strands in European culture have come through Christendom, from Hellas, Rome, Persia and the Germanic north as well as from Christianity itself. To these were added the influences of the successive waves of invaders from the east as well as of the diverse cultures overseas which Europeans explored and exploited. The resultant compound, whose individual sources no one can unscramble, is the foundation on which the whole structure of modern science, industry and technology was built. These imposing structures fill the landscape but the foundation is unseen and unremembered. There is still a European culture, and it is one embracing the people of the north-west peninsula of Asia and their offshore islands, and also many individuals outside it, in the Russian land mass and beyond the oceans.

It exists, but it comprehends only those who can see and feel it, and for this certain conditions must be fulfilled. In order fully to belong to European culture one must be aware of other Europeans, know some history, know another language or several, take some pleasure in literature or painting or old buildings. Those who have such awareness have always been minorities, everywhere. But in recent times some minorities have grown and some have shrunk. In most Continental countries there seems to be growth. Even the once invincibly unilingual Gallocentric French are learning their neighbours' speech as never before. In the Soviet empire there is a vigorous demand for foreign-language teaching, though there is some disagreement between rulers and ruled as to which language should be learned. Only in one country has the teaching of foreign languages—all of them, whether ancient or modern—the desire of pupils for them, and the belief by the authorities that they deserve study, strikingly slumped: in Britain. Nowadays foreigners are all learning English, so there is no need, some argue, for the English to learn theirs. Mass-produced translated texts will give us all we need, and with more and better computers language learning, not to mention literature and history, will be irrelevant.

Will they? How far is it possible to understand the thinking of persons of other lands without knowing either their language or their past? Even in hard-headed export trade the bilingual, or trilingual, salesperson has an advantage over the unilingual. As for history and literature, it is precisely the ability to remember, to imagine, and to record both memory and fantasy which differentiates man from ape.

Governments will continue to quarrel; conflicts of

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interest will persist, with changing shape and intensity, between nations and between classes; and the two ancient dichotomies of civilisation against barbarism, and true faith against infidels, will reassert themselves from time to time.

But the unity of European culture is independent of these things. It is not an instrument of capitalism or socialism; it is not a monopoly possession of EEC Eurocrats or anyone else. To own allegiance to it is not to claim superiority to other cultures—not to the Chinese and Japanese, which today would be manifestly ridiculous; not to Muslim, even when its spokesmen proclaim their hatred of us; not to African, an injustice which is mercifully less widespread than it used to be; and not to American, though this is still quite fashionable among some who fancy themselves as European intellectuals. Nor should allegiance to it be incompatible with the aspiration to create in time a wider Western culture or still more distantly a world-wide culture of humanity. These admirable aspirations will not be advanced by ignoring or even erasing what is shared between all the peoples of Europe, or what is peculiar to each individual people. The unity of European culture is simply the end-product of 3,000 years of labour by our diverse ancestors. It is a heritage which we spurn at our peril, and of which it would be a crime to deprive younger and future generations. Rather it is our task to preserve and renew it.

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Birds

I stare through a gap in the garden hedge
Distracted by a dramatic fancy
Of bees courting a maiden flower
And an item teasing from the line,
And am aware that I am watched, too.
A bird in the hedge's chamber stares
Rounded with fearfulness, pretending.
What terror could I mean to bring
On this second-hand home, this rubbishy room
Guarded by a poor slum mother?
I go closer, testing her fortitude.
A species eye simple with instinct
Gleams back at me, an odd find, worthless
As bottle-glass hidden in dirt.
Thus I might mistake some fate
Stooping stupendously above me
Like clouds above an anxious walker
Or, worse, the great angry beast of the world
Rearing for destruction. If I
Keep still, pretend, it will not see me.
I picture Mediterranean birds
Flying past my inner eye, a casement
Detail in a peaceful painting,
Tips of trees that may be witnessing
An Annunciation. A feathery trail
Disperses down the angelic sky.
By now the marauding beast has roamed
Into some penitential landscape.
My eyelid windows gleam relief,
Birds flutter, settle on the ledge.
Fearful no longer I walk the chamber
Matching the quiet pace of my heart.

Patrick Hare

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John Loveday

Deux jeunes filles lisant

We turn the page. She reads the words
That will not pass my eyes, shape thoughts
I want to share, make images
I want to hold, as I hold her,
Would still, in these calm moments here,
After. Suppose the selfsame words
The selfsame moment registered:
To be so close. . . . They'd go their own
Ways though, divide inside our heads
Like travellers on different roads.

Her places are not mine, Provence,
The little farms I've seen from trains,
Her faces, voices, houses, trees,
Her sea, her bare brown limbs — a child,
Her little schoolroom, books, her bed,
The birds beneath the eaves. . . .

The traffic drones outside, a plane
High up, like God, goes South
Because it always goes at four. . . .
She looks at me and smiles. I smile.
We turn the page.

In half an hour we'll dress. I'll be
Bonnard, I'll watch her go
From room to room, a barefoot nude,
In light and shadow by the door,
The yellows, mauves, her amber skin,
Reach up, unwind the towel, let
Her hair fall, go against the glass
And comb and comb, bend to the drawer
And take her clothes, and turn to me.
I'll stand where she stood, and she'll say
"You're beautiful. Get dressed." She'll see
In her way only, artless, crude:
I'll never be more than I am
Through her eyes, never light and dark,
A turning line across a page,
Mysterious and real. . . .

One day
She'll leave, let some thick farmer roll
On top each night, breed beautiful
Brown children . . . *Le petit paysan* . . .
Blue-eyed, identical. I'll cry
Awhile. She'll write: "Come down and stay."
Perhaps I'll go. "He's in the fields.
I still read in the afternoon.

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Sometimes I think of how you stood
In sunlight by the door. I try
To see as you would, like Bonnard.
It's easier now. I could not look
Sometimes—you were so actual.
I'd have you so again. Come soon."
She turns the page. Her face is blurred.
"Dreamer, you've hardly read a word."

Michael Henry

Grange Hollies

There are hollies in the grounds
cotoneaster berries and pyracantha that men call firethorn
behind the garden a picket fence
curved like staves against the cold
and behind the fence stands the house
with a glowworm glimmer of hospitality—

A late traveller benighted on the moor
I tap on the door like a metronome
will they shut their advent window this foggy night—
two assenting hearts dissenting
the lady wears her hair in a huntswoman's net
the gentleman is granite grey—

All right—I can share what fare is theirs
but Blindman's Holiday he insists
and dims the lights for supper—
like miners who have lost their pit sense
they are not used to blindness
I hear the uncertain clack of tine on tooth
throughout that meal in braille
like the twittering of mah-jong tiles—

There is a third at table invisible
until I accidentally overturn a polescreen
and the firelight shows what I'm not meant to see:
the total whiteness of two eyes
sewn-up in a plasticiney face with threadbare scabs of hair—
I scream, the lights go on—
No, no, it was only in the flickering of the fire . . .
the parents seem pleased and propose a toast
to the children their son once saved from fire—
I choke as from burnt radiator dust . . .
the copy of that boy's soul will come out pink and newborn
with burnt birth marks.

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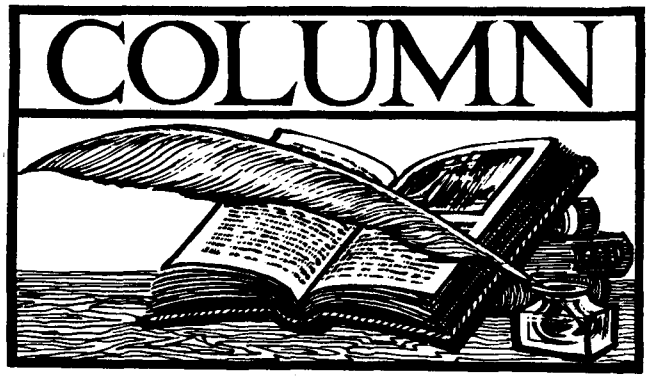

WHERE ARE the jokes of yesteryear? Embalmed, for the most part, in dictionaries of quotations. Chestnuts of more recent vintage survive in fun-factory catalogues, all whoopee cushions and itching-powder, or in sundry regrettable heirlooms: tea-towels which list the visitors' menial duties, ashtrays with sexist proverbs in Italian or Spanish, facetious birthday-cards occasionally spiced by a glimpse of caricatured buttocks. And, fading in shops and offices nationwide, there are all those witty notices that people put up twenty years ago to show how democratic they all were. "LOOK AHEAD"—"THE BOSS IS ALWAYS RIGHT, ESPECIALLY WHEN HE'S WRONG"—YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE CRAZY TO WORK HERE, BUT IT HELPS." You don't have to be boring to display that one, but I wouldn't mind taking a bet.

Still, sometimes the slogans are useful. *Carpe Diem* might have been salutary on the desks of Viet Nam specialists. *Kill Time* would do for editors of *Newsweek*. And for literary critics I've always fancied a hardwood plaque inscribed with Tennyson's alleged gibe at John Churton Collins: "A Louse on the Locks of Literature."

If Tennyson ever said it—which some doubt—he was reacting to an ill-disposed article in the *Cornhill* magazine for January 1880. But critics had been vilified long before that. Nearly four centuries earlier, Thomas Dekker had warned his fellow-writers: "Take heed of criticks: they bite, like fish, at anything, especially at bookes." In 1674, the critic Thomas Rymer likened his colleagues to wolves. Byron, smarting under attack by Brougham in the *Edinburgh Review*, riposted with "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers":

> *A man must serve his time to every trade*
> *Save censure—critics all are ready made.*
> *Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,*
> *With just enough of learning to misquote. . . .*

Coleridge, lecturing on Milton and Shakespeare, told his audience:

> "Reviewers are usually people who would have been poets, historians, biographers, etc., if they could; they have tried their talents at one or at the other, and have failed; therefore they turn critics."

Disraeli echoed him. "You know who the Critics are? The men who have failed in Literature and Art." And, 40-odd years ago, lamenting State patronage of "Culture-Diffusion" at the expense of creation, Cyril Connolly announced:

> "We are becoming a nation of commentators, of critics and hack-explainers, most of whom are ex-artists. Everything for the Milk-bar, nothing for the Cow!"

Brought up on such *obiter dicta*, I shared the general mistrust of English as a university discipline—a study pioneered, as it happened, by the luckless Churton Collins. Instead, I read History, only faintly envying friends who studied as a duty the books I turned to for pleasure. There seemed something sybaritic in the "work" of reading novels and poems, even from distant centuries or in alien tongues. And to read them for examinations, I felt, might anyway warp one's response. School Shakespeare, with the puns explained in laboured footnotes, had already ruined *Twelfth Night* and wounded *Julius Caesar*. Would Spenser survive seminars, or Tolstoy transcend tutorials? Myself, I felt no urge to add further essays on the "significance" of this or that to the growing silt of commentary and evaluation. It was bad enough having to trot out a tyro's weekly opinions on Empire and Papacy, the Merchant Adventurers, or the Theory of the Modern State.

So I KEPT my distance, hunched in the library over Pipe Rolls, and enjoying Flaubert and Chaucer in bed, armchair, or punt. I took time out to sneak into literary lectures, notably sampling Dr Leavis's crowded hours. His audiences—and his mimics—tended to traduce him, stressing scornful asides on Bloomsbury and cultural journalists, underplaying the dialogue he tried to sustain. Reading his books and articles, I'm told, was a poor substitute for attending his supervisions; but I preferred that to the tone of his congregations.

I choose the word to be accurate, not snide. Leavis's lecturing manner was far more *ex cathedra* than the "This is so, is it not?" and "Yes, but" of his ideal tutorial. The podium was a pulpit, and the lecturer a revivalist—an open-neck-shirted, plain-cooking Puritan closer to North Oxford than to lotus-eating Cambridge. It was bracing and refreshing after antiquarian pedantry and slippered love of books. Reading today the somnolent twaddle that passed for criticism when Leavis was young, one can't be surprised at his impatience.

Nevertheless, I wondered. Was all the severity in part a reaction against the unspoken fear or accusation that literature was peripheral, recreational, indeed a matter for bed, armchair, or punt? The struggle to establish it as a serious discipline had left scars; perhaps this was one of them. There was also the perennial charge that critics were parasitic—grandly answered by the assertion that real criticism was as creative as art. The lice, that is, were as lively as the locks. They certainly had more animus.

At its best, Leavis's work was its own vindication. Contrary to some allegations, it didn't rely merely on "close reading", in isolation from the semantic or historical context. It involved philosophy and sociology, if sometimes in concealed assumptions. It was élitist, in the good sense that it upheld standards of literacy, attention, honesty, and moral concern. Few could fail to profit from the example of Leavis's

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responsiveness to his chosen texts.

That, of course, is a doubly restrictive judgment. The "canon" of chosen texts established worthwhile distinctions and a debatable hierarchy: but the debate was often one-sided, and some good writers were unduly maligned. Nor did Leavisite exegesis always enrich the understanding. Sometimes, it told the attentive reader what he had already seen.

Towards the end of his life, Leavis now and then fell back on merely pointing, as it were. "The live, the living nature itself of Lawrence's thought soon brought out its unamenableness to orderly exposition of that kind. One might say that the complex totality of *Women in Love* is needed to convey the superlative force and nuance, the supreme value, the word 'life' has for his comprehensive creative thought." He was taken to task a little for thus repeating "Read the book." But in so far as this wasn't just an abdication of the critic's function, it affirmed an important (and self-denying) truth. There's no substitute, that is, for the work of art. The critic, at best, is an impresario, a spotlighter, X-ray specialist, scholar-historian, curator, and gallery guide.

YOU'D NOT THINK SO after reading today's critical confraternity. In a loose popular sense, it's probably been true for centuries that more people read criticism or reviews than ever read—or buy—the original works. With the rise of the "crib" industry, churning out "notes" on even popular novels, this may apply to schoolchildren as much as to readers of the weekend papers. But what increasingly bothers me is that university students of literature, supposedly let loose among masterpieces, now find the Elysian Fields cluttered with ribbon development—hot from the typewriters and word processors of countless literary theorists, many of them writing about each other.

In 1977, the late Elmer Borklund published a 550-page reference book, *Contemporary Literary Critics*. It summarised the views of 115 practitioners, and listed literally thousands of their books and articles on the theory and practice of criticism. There were the "humanists", the Freudians, the Marxists, the Chicago Critics or "pluralists"; there were the "New Critics"; there were the phenomenonologists. Since then, further schools have developed, including the feminists: but the most remarkable growth has been in the theory of reading. In a sense, it's the critics' revenge.

Perhaps the best-known exemplar of this school is Stanley Fish. Arguing that only the members of one "interpretive community" will perceive—nay, "create"—a particular text, he sees "persuasion" by a critic as the only way to make a member of one such community join another. He continues:

> "Perhaps the greatest gain that falls to us [critics] under a persuasion model is a greatly enhanced sense of the importance of our activities. . . . No longer is the critic the humble servant of texts whose glories exist independently of anything he might do; it is what he does, within the constraints embedded in the literary institution, that brings texts into being and makes them available for analysis and appreciation."

Never mind the jargon: feel the *chutzpah*. It goes along, of course, with attacks from other quarters. There's Harold Bloom's argument that "every act of reading is . . . defensive", an attempt to resist invasion by alien art, so that the reader distorts its meaning in order to fit his own psyche. "There are no right readings", Bloom concludes: there are only "weak mis-readings and strong mis-readings." Structuralist theory, meanwhile, has been undermining the notion of the artist's autonomy, showing how much of what he writes is predetermined by the language system and all that it implies. Finally, and in some contradiction to the structuralists, Jacques Derrida's and others' deconstructive theories reinstate the text, but at the expense of the writer's supposed intentions and of any ordinary reader's fixed interpretation.

Many of these theorists, including J. Hillis Miller and Derrida himself, are sensitive and ingenious readers and critics. But pity the poor old "common reader": he's ceased to exist. His disappearance is more obvious, of course, in the United States than in Britain: Hispanics, Blacks, Asians, and Eskimos are all pretty remote, in their different ways, from the cultivated English middle-class connoisseur implicitly addressed by Virginia Woolf. But so, too, are many present-day inhabitants of the United Kingdom, whether "patrial" or not. Part of the problem in literary education is to create Stanley Fish's "interpretive community"—even at the level of explaining what daffodils are, let alone what they meant to Wordsworth.

To that extent, I sympathise with the critical theorists, bombastic and obscurantist as they often seem. They appear to be saying, in ways that will grab attention, a number of useful truths. *Item*: that education is necessary for literary appreciation. *Item*: that we all tend to read our preconceptions into the text. *Item*: that no writer can escape his language, history, and background. *Item*: that, as Empson brilliantly taught us all, there are rich ambiguities in the greatest art.

I'm aware, in writing thus, of exposing my flank. To say "one", as in paragraphs 6 and 10 above, is to posit a probably fictitious "community." To paraphrase is to "misread." To speak of "art" is not only old hat, but derogatory to the status of critics.

AS YOU MAY HAVE GUESSED, I'm unrepentant. Facing the flood of critical books that gush from the presses, especially in America, I begin to wonder whether "art" can swim. Biographies, yes: it's a help, *pace* the old New Critics, to look at more than merely the text. Critical studies of authors, up to a point: they often seem to be Ph.D. theses in hard covers, overpraising mediocrities or saying the obvious about the great. Grand overviews, rarely: we can all form our own opinions if we work hard enough, and oecumenical literary sages seldom do. *Great Traditions*? They're very infrequent. When Leavis wrote his, he was erecting signposts in a desert of dilettantism. I don't really know which of his successors are the more discouraging—those who slavishly follow the Leavis trail, pretending to be full of insight, or those who offer rival attractions which don't finally convince.

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They try harder, perhaps, like Avis: but, by heaven, they need to.

AND LITERARY THEORY? Glamorous as it now is, and indispensable to the career of any Associate Professor of English, I can't beat up a modicum of passion for it. In the Middle Ages, patient copyists acted as pre-printers, slowly multiplying the sacred texts. Cleverer men wrote Biblical commentaries; those cleverer still wrote commentaries on commentaries; and so it went on. The resultant edifice, superposing theory upon theory upon theory, came to be known as "scholasticism." The Renaissance sneered at its excesses. Not all the sneers were justified: many of the schoolmen were struggling to express sophisticated ideas—an increase in the rate of increase, for example—in language ill-adapted for them, and hence sounding bizarre. It's good to bear that in mind when wrestling with critical jargon. Remember the days when "bookmen" ridiculed Dr Leavis's "style"? It may not have been Georgian "elegance" in its heyday—but it was muscular, versatile, argumentative, and subtle. Above all, it forced one to think.

It could well be that future readers will find comparable quality in some of today's apparently rebarbative literary theorists. They certainly compel close attention. My fear is that, while life is short, they may pre-empt the timetable. Art is long, but critical theory's longer. And in the last resort, my sympathy still lies with those quiet, anonymous copyists, their pens and noses brushing the holy pages. If I really had to choose a slogan to carve for a student of English literature, it would be that stalest of truisms: READ THE BOOK.

M

The Realists

The rows. Remorse. The birthday guilt
It seemed we'd always waited for.
How quickly childhood makes itself
The subject of all pain. At least
Unhappiness was made to match.

We can talk of the fear on the landing,
Empty shops and lightless Sundays,
Bare legs and cold knuckles. The voices
Transmitted their coded distress
From room to room, half-audibly.

Conspirators in adult hurt,
We were given an atlas to look at.
The globe like a clockface described
Its true circle and all the routes
Guided us back to this room

Where we share an impoverished tongue—
What's wise, what's best, what shan't be thought
By persons whose business is penance
For lives that were never begun.
This evening is an afterlife:

Looking and carefully looking away
We rehearse the responsible half-truths
Like adults, with habits of fiction.
The words will be all we can make,
So that meaning deserts them, then self,

Until only the voices are left
For the listeners awake on the stairs,
Who have learned to believe this is how
These affairs are conducted, and think
Of a day they will speak for themselves.

Sean O'Brien

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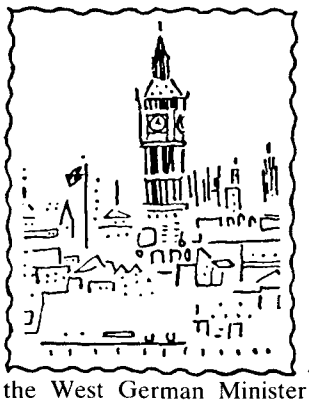
NOTES & TOPICS

Forty Years On

Germans, Russians & Other Strangers—By EDWARD PEARCE



PRESIDENT REAGAN has failings, an excess of uplift, not as much modern history as would be useful, a certain tendency to fixed-faced good will of a compulsive sort. Even so, at the conclusion of his visit to Western Europe last month it has been hard not to feel that the President's enemies do him great credit.

One picks at random: the French President (speaking for the West German Minister of Agriculture) administers a shrivelling snub—not only on the Strategic Defence Initiative but on the far more immediate issue of liberalising Europe's incestuous, indefensible agricultural trade régime. The Portuguese Communists in the Lisbon parliament bring along a white dove by way of reproof from the peace-loving elements. The yobbish tendency inside the Strasbourg Assembly (almost to a man British) first heckle Mr Reagan and then march out on him. He is patronised, and the Americans with him, by that large part of the British media which cannot get buckskins and film cameras out of its constrained mind after four-and-a-half years of contentious but probably rather successful government. One sweet old Irish lady writes in a serious daily of the American government as "cretinous." A Mr von Hoffman writing from New York for a British weekly tries odiously to link the soft-spoken anti-Semitism which made F. D. Roosevelt so impervious to the truth about the extermination camps with a supposed moral indifference on the part of Ronald Reagan; the oppositional Democrats play the 49 graves at Bitburg like a concert grand; the President is everywhere untruthfully described as "laying a wreath on *SS* graves." He is mocked, patronised, and derided.

What a good thing it is then that we have television pictures so that a dim East Coast Liberal like Nicholas von Hoffman, and his counterparts here, could see your actual East German and Soviet Armies, the hardware they paraded in the street, and the step they marched to. What a good thing that Mr Gorbachev—cultured, sophisticated, and different—should have told us so frankly that we colluded with the Nazis. Ugly faces are best seen close up. And the face of Mikhail Gorbachev is much of a prettiness with the goose step to which his armies march. Nobody, but nobody, marches through London, Washington, or Bonn carrying missiles on trailers and smashing jackboots down on the asphalt. And, of course, nobody, or hardly anybody, accuses the Russians of colluding with the Nazis between 1939 and 1941. As for the American presence in Nicaragua, it deserves minute comparison with the Russian presence in Afghanistan. How many helicopter gunships? how much gas? how many dead? how many foreign divisions? how much pressure for withdrawal from dissenting Soviet parliamentarians?

The festival of stupidity to which parts of our media, on both sides of the Atlantic, treated themselves, was heart breaking. We are all liberal democracies. We all want to stay that way. Russia is the same uninviting, crass, iron-knuckled despotism which, piling Lenin upon the Czars, that country always has been. Any contrary view is for children.

We were invited during the President's trip and the celebrations of VE Day to see it differently through the eyes of Hitler's Russian victims. The brave, terrible story of Russian defence of Russia ought never to be forgotten and ought never to be used as a psychological weapon against Western defence of the West. A moral distinction to be drawn between the ruler of the USSR in 1941 and the ruler of the Third Reich cannot be made. Beside the extermination of Jews stands the extermination of class enemies in the same range of numbers. The ciné-cameras did not stand at the gates of Kolyma and Vorkuta as they did at those of Dachau and Belsen. We rely upon the spoken word, upon Solzhenitsyn, Mandelstam and Varlam Shalamov—mere words, a light and little-regarded currency, but one tied to an equal truth. Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales* must have been read by one person for every five hundred thousand who have seen the newsreels of skeletal Jews and Poles in striped pyjamas, but his account of the bulldozing of a hill made up entirely of frozen human corpses is worth the reading.

It is not, however, a reason for hating Russians. Yet the most melancholy aspect of the entire visit and celebration has been the resolute determination of so many people to hate Germans. We had better get out of this self-pleasing delusion *subito*. Russia is not Stalin; Germany is not Hitler. One regrets the use of platitudes but some people evidently stand in need of having platitudes read to them . . . very slowly. It was a proper and fitting thing that, the War forty years gone, the President of the United States should lay a wreath upon the *Denkmal* at a German military cemetery. I am mightily weary of crude anti-Germanism. The Germans are entitled in 1985 to be judged upon what they are now, upon what they

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have done in the lifetime of men in early middle age, as are the Russians. Even if one allows for the 15-year-olds sometimes pressed into the *Volkssturm* as the War was ebbing, nobody under the age of 55 could actually have served in the War. Nobody under the age of 72 could have cast a vote to bring Hitler to power.

Publicity was widely given to a gathering of repellent unrepentant old men of the *Waffen-SS* at a Bavarian hotel, but support for anything entitled accurately to be called "Fascist" in West German elections is down among the decimal points of 1%—not the case in France or alas, in Italy where M. Le Pen and Signor Almirante thrive. Incidentally, isn't it a bit disturbing that his Holiness Pope John Paul II should have received (and, by all accounts, received kindly) each of these appalling men, noting their sound views on abortion? Nobody has made a fuss about the encounter apart from Giovanni Spadolini, the former Italian Prime Minister. Our press were almost mute. But when the advance team from the White House missed 49 snow-covered *Waffen-SS* graves of 1944, parts of the ceiling collapsed.

ANTI-AMERICANISM takes the form of feeble contempt, the view expressed nearly 50 years ago by the fascist-minded Hilaire Belloc, that America was "a giant idiot child" whom we could "wangle" into saving us when needed. Anti-Germanism, whatever its roots (and they go back far beyond the First World War), owes a great deal now to envy. The 40-year-old footage of the crimes of Hitler and those who directly carried out the Holocaust sometimes sounds like a pretext. It may be a good thing that we have a great German evil to latch on to. Otherwise we should be stuck with the contemporary comparison alone—the German growth rate, the German trade unions, the German parliamentary system, 40 years of rational, civilised and unforgivably successful management of their affairs. Whatever embarrassment the Americans may have suffered, Herr Kohl insisted in his bumblingly effective way that the wreaths should be laid and that the notion of the eternally-guilty, eternally-to-be-hated German put to rest with it.

In my view the Jewish lobby in America was, respectfully, mistaken to press the fierce case that it did. Nobody will forget the murder of their people. If you have visited Auschwitz with a Polish guide and looked at the little mountains of children's shoes in glass cases and the nail-scratches in cement on the ceiling of the gas chamber you will indeed not forget, and Herr von Weizsäcker, the West German President, accepted the responsibility of the elder generation for the sins of not wanting trouble, of acquiescence, of terrible omission. But how far is it the shoes of children which make us angry with the Germans? How far habit? How far the fact that Germany has done so much more with her defeat than we with our victory? How much does it owe to the unhealthy onanistic preoccupation of the half-reading public with cheap adventure stories, popular history and fiction, spun off from the War we had a part in winning long ago. The consolation to the British of reading Alistair Horne down the long years of slothful incapacity has been altogether too much like Don Quixote's passion for the knights and paladins of Romance.

Ironically we should be taking legitimate credit for the institutions which West Germany has adopted from Britain and America, for a parliamentary system balanced between moderate Right and moderate Left, for a strong judiciary and for the most adult and responsible trade unions anywhere in the world. Germany has had too many absolutes, and now lives pragmatically. The *Volksgemeinschaft* is not now the model of the German state. Interestingly, France, which was humiliated (not least at its own hands) during the War but which found self-respect in its economic performance since then, has systematically had truer and closer relations with Germany than we the British have ever managed. It would be nice if our best efforts were addressed to the present indicative tense.

The reason why Russia, despite the wonderful courage of the defenders of Leningrad, is an opponent and West Germany, despite the invasion of Poland and Bohemia is not, is firstly one of menace. The Soviet Union is pointing missiles at us, West Germany is not. But for those who took such pleasure in moralising there ought to be another reason. The states once governed respectively by a Georgian ogre and an Austrian monster have both declined some way from that condition. The modern German state I have described has no particle of National-Socialist practice about it. As for Mr Gorbachev's Russia, it does not indeed create disciplinary famines, nor does it practise the capricious Terror in which purge succeeded purge until Kolyma was overflowing into the grave. But it teaches its boy-scouts how to strip and assemble a Kalashnikov (and its boy-scouts are not, as in Britain, 5% of the age group but a useful 70%). It is governed by the nominees of Stalin's comrades who had a way of being *his* nominees. People who disagree are put in lunatic asylums; people who really disagree (like Georgi Markov on Waterloo Bridge) are murdered. I quite forget when a Chancellor in Bonn last murdered anybody. Countries which disagree get invaded by comradely invitation. And while there are now more missiles to carry past the saluting-box than can be altogether managed, meat is eaten outside Moscow about as often as in 18th-century Dorset. Pictures of the Leader are everywhere and the Red Army in regimental masses marches to the goose step. In terms of civil liberty Russia is indeed less oppressed than in Stalin's time or than Germany under Hitler, but I doubt if it has any edge at all over the state administered by Mussolini.

ALL THIS the world well knows . . . but tends to forget. Mr Reagan was in Strasbourg, Bonn, and Lisbon (and indeed in Bitburg) because these platitudinous truths subsist.

He kept his nerve and came. The British contingent at Strasbourg and the Portuguese (the most unequivocally Stalinist Communist Party in Europe) staged walk-outs from the forums he spoke to. American Jews are angry with a sincerely philo-Semitic President. The trade talks failed for reasons discreditable to the EEC and Japan. The imbecile end of the British press, like the cartoonist Jak and the fatuous Honor Tracy, have had their ignorant and offensive

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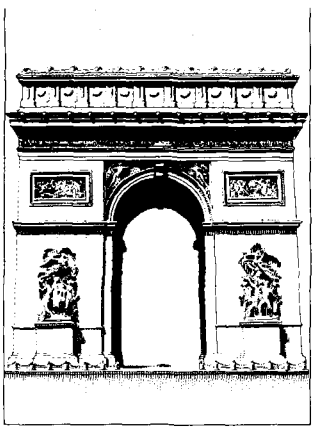
outings. But by the conclusion of the expedition Mr Reagan had done what any sane, civilised politician would wish to do, he had won the good will of the population of his most important ally. And if he was a little effusive, he did not sacrifice dignity. Ironically Mr Gorbachev, who has so much blind and hungry wish-fulfilment running for him here—and who was blessed with a backdrop of dreadful scourings and reminders as we reran both the horror films and the wartime newsreels from the "Uncle Joe" era—actually loused it all up. The mask, as *Pravda* would put it, slipped; and the face underneath, of the man accusing us of collusion with the Nazis, was a familiar one—and snarling.

Mr Reagan may have got modest satisfaction only from his summit meeting with friendly heads of government. But one cannot resist the observation that by a maladroit if well-intended step he accomplished more than the projected encounter with Gorbachev could ever do. As the applause for Stalin registers and as the Nazi collusion charge is made, I think we have all met Mr Gorbachev!

Letter from Paris

On Deserving Pétain

By François Fejtö



SEVERAL OF the best books about contemporary French history have been written by Americans and Englishmen. To Robert O. Paxman we owe an excellent (though highly controversial) book on Vichy France; to Theodore Zeldin a remarkable book on the dominant passions of the French. Now Herbert R. Lottman, who produced a very judicious biography of Albert Camus, and a detailed account of the Left Bank, has attacked a subject of notorious difficulty, one upon which the French remain quite as divided as they were between 1940 and 1945: the life of Marshal Pétain (Editions du Seuil).[1]

"Two series of contradictory myths have made the victor of Verdun either a God or a Devil", says Lottman, and he has taken advantage of the opening of the *Archives Nationales* to produce a demythologised portrait of the Marshal; he has also had access to numerous private libraries, and interviewed many witnesses. The monumental compilation resulting from these labours presents, if not a *Pétain inconnu*, then at least a fuller and more thorough version. Lottman makes no judgments; he confines himself to collecting and juxtaposing the facts, and meticulously retracing the slow ascent of the soldier of peasant parentage, a colonel in 1914, whose role in the battle of Verdun made him a national hero, Marshal of France, member of the *Académie*. The strength of Pétain was his prudent reserve. By instinct a man of the Right, like most French officers, he was closer to Charles Maurras than to Léon Blum, an anti-Freemason, a non-practising Catholic, anti-Semitic, an admirer of Franco; but he kept his opinions to himself. This discretion earned him certain sympathies from many on the liberal-left.

The most interesting pages of Lottman's book deal with the complex relationship between Pétain and de Gaulle. Pétain wanted to enlist de Gaulle as a ghost-writer, *un nègre*, for an historical essay on the French army—which de Gaulle eventually published under his own name, with a dedication acknowledging the role of the Marshal, whom this did not satisfy. From this sprang a reciprocal animosity which became a bitter rivalry after the defeat of 1940.

> "His vanity leads him to believe that the art of war has no secrets for him, Pétain said of his future rival. He is not only vain, but ungrateful."

De Gaulle, for his part, was no less extreme in judging his former patron, whom he met in Bordeaux a few days before the Armistice and the departure for England.

> "Too proud for intrigue, too strong for mediocrity, too ambitious for careerism, he nursed in his solitude an ambition to dominate. Old age is a shipwreck [a remark later attributed to Malraux]. Unhappily for the nation, this old age of Pétain [he was 84 in 1940] was to be identified with the wrecking of France."

Pétain expressed himself in similar terms about de Gaulle: "He is a man of dreadful ambition. As arrogant as any man I have ever met, a liar, hard to get on with. . . ." Could they both be right?

MANY IN FRANCE will refuse to believe in the decline, not to say the treason, of Pétain; for them the Marshal and the General had been a patriotic tandem, working hand-in-glove, both of them resisting the enemy, one to save the French people from the worst, the other to assure his country's future through maintaining the alliance with the future victors. This collusion did not actually exist; but it emerges clearly from the mass of documents examined by Lottman that Marshal Pétain's collaboration with the Nazi régime and the German Occupation was never complete and sincere. He resisted in his own way, always keeping his distance from Pierre Laval (who never stopped believing in a Hitler victory). Pétain refused quite often to give way to German pressure, on the pretext of "allowing for public opinion" and "not reinforcing opposition." "I put up with Laval, for it was a necessary concession", he was to say. Yet Laval managed to terrorise the old man by describing to

[1] *Pétain, Hero or Traitor: The Untold Story*. By HERBERT R. LOTTMAN. William Morrow & Co., $17.45, £21.00.

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him all the horrors which lay in store for France if he directly opposed the will of the Nazis.

The most credible evidence for Pétain's resistance came from the American Ambassador, William Leahy, who remained by his side in Vichy till 1942 in the hope of exerting American influence. He extracted from Pétain the promise that France would never provide the Germans with military aid. Admiral Leahy had a great deal of sympathy with Marshal Pétain; but Washington soon began to question the wisdom of backing the Marshal rather than "the dissidents." Leahy's own view was that, after the Anglo-American landing in North Africa, Pétain should have made his way to Africa and taken command of *la France libre*. As it was, Pétain was delighted about the landing but thought that his place was on French soil. He believed to the end that, on balance, his reign had been positive, that he had gained a degree of liberty for his people, and had saved France from the fate of Poland. Even de Gaulle was later obliged to acknowledge that most Frenchmen had the feeling that Pétain was playing a deep game (which, in a way, was true)—but that he was "secretly" in agreement with the leader of free France, which was false. Still, legends are hardy. Recall the story of how the British had secretly offered to give Marshal Pétain a place on the plane which was due to fly de Gaulle to the Middle East, and how Pétain turned the offer down. . . .

De Gaulle was undoubtedly right when he said that Pétain's crucial mistake, *le vrai crime*, was the Armistice. The rest—collaboration with the occupying forces; the struggle against the Free French and against the Allies in Dakar, Syria, Algeria, etc; the attacks on the *Résistance* carried out in partnership with the *Gestapo*; the creation of the militia; the giving back of political prisoners, Jews, and foreign refugees to Hitler—all this stemmed from the armistice. It was no good Pétain trying to justify his actions by claiming that he only made compromises in order to avoid some greater evil. The evil was too great. His patriotism was also soiled by the idea of taking revenge on the *France républicaine* that he dested. He tried to profit from defeat by saddling his country with an authoritarian, paternalist State. He got rid of what he considered to be the corrupted motto "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité*"; and he replaced it by "*Travail, famille, patrie*", paving the way for an hereditary monarchy together with a corporate state for the organisation of labour.

THE END OF THE STORY is wretched. The old man thought that he could shake hands with de Gaulle to ensure a peaceful transition, and hoped that his American friends would help him. Having been imprisoned by the Nazis in Vichy, and then in the German castle at Sigmaringen, he gave himself up to the Resistance, which judged him *comme traitre à la patrie*. The High Court condemned him to death, a verdict which General de Gaulle commuted to detention for life. He died in prison in July 1951, on the Ile d'Yeu, in southern Brittany, his cell turned into a sick-room. It was François Mauriac who passed perhaps the fairest verdict on his life:

> "The French deserved Pétain, but they also deserved de Gaulle."

The Snow-plough

I force the machine over blank white, inch
a metallic trail, slewing round the end of

lines. Writing you shouldn't be like writing . . . stone-
walling at every ambivalent word,
so's not to read like less than off the cuff
. . . the note? I stop typing: the snow-plough still

clangs up the hill . . . a chain-mail jingle-jangle
track. "I wanted to write you" as I'd talk
but words get in the way. The text's a type
of layer-cake *montage*: iced over mush
of slush, the road and soil, the way, earth's red
hot core. Do you write everyone so . . . kind?
And come the revolution, when we're good
to each other, how shall we know what lies
personally, sometimes, under a gentle
word? Under the eerie white light of dusk—June
midnight moonlight glimmering on the snow—
I goat-foot to the post-box in the wall,
iron-lipped above the snow's drift-line, so far.
Climb back. Thanks for the snow-plough drivers' grind,
keeping open communication lines.

Val Warner

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A Special Book Section

Literature & Criticism

The Plot Thickens

The Human Nature of Narrative—By DAVID LODGE

I GAVE A public lecture in Canada recently, at the end of which a man stood up and asked me a question. He had read a great many *Reader's Digest* "Condensed Books" and, when he had had occasion to make the comparison, they seemed to him just as good as, and sometimes better than, the original texts. If that were so, what was the point of all the matter that had been omitted from the condensed versions? My answer was the orthodox one: novels are narratives, but they are not *just* narratives—they have, or should have, other sources of interest and value. Certain kinds of popular fiction whose appeal was simply narrative might benefit by condensation, but I couldn't imagine that a novel like, say, *War and Peace* would lose nothing by being abridged.

I chose *War and Peace* as an example because it was the longest novel I could think of. I did not confess that, for the same reason, I haven't actually got around to reading it yet. My answer was disingenuous in other, more abstract ways. It implied an over-simplified model of the relationship between narrative and non-narrative elements in the novel. After all, it is not just the latter which are deleted from a "condensed" version of a given novel—some of the narrative content will almost certainly go too. Translations of novels to film provide the readiest examples. Take, for instance, *Great Expectations*—one of the texts discussed by Peter Brooks in his admirable new study of narrative.[1] In David Lean's highly praised film of 1946, the character of Orlick and all the action associated with him are omitted without any damage to the coherence and intelligibility of the story. This does not mean that Orlick has no function in Dickens's text—he has, as Professor Brooks astutely observes, "throughout the novel acted as Pip's 'bad double', a hateful and sadistic version of the hero"—but it is not a necessary function. The Orlick subplot enriches the meaning of the text but is not essential to it. Pip's discovery that the former convict Magwitch is his benefactor, on the other hand, *is* essential. As Brooks says, "All the issues raised in the novel—social, ethical, interpretive—are here simultaneously brought to climax through the peripety of the plot." It is inconceivable that this piece of action could be deleted from any version of *Great Expectations*, even a 100-word summary.

Jonathan Culler has observed that if you get a group of readers to summarise a novel or story in a specified number of words, they will invariably include and exclude the same data, suggesting that competent readers have an intuitive sense of what is and is not essential to narrative structure.[2] No one, I suppose, would claim that such a summary was an acceptable substitute for the text itself, though the logic of the "Condensed Books" enterprise might seem to point in that direction. What, then, is the difference between a condensation and a summary?

An answer to that question might begin with the Platonic distinction between *diegesis* (report of action) and *mimesis* (representation of action through the speech and gesture of actors). The plot summary of *Great Expectations* in *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* is pure diegesis; David Lean's film (apart from a few bits of voice-over narration) is pure mimesis. Dickens's text, like all novels, is a mixture of the two modes, of (to use modern terminology) "scene" and "summary", "showing" and "telling"—with a special complication inherent in all "first person" narratives: Pip's diegetic report of his life includes mimesis of his own and other people's speech, but is itself a feat of mimesis on Dickens's part. *Great Expectations* is, in Mikhail Bakhtin's phrase, "doubly-voiced discourse." In the gaps between the narrating Pip and the narrated Pip, between Pip and his creator, meanings thrive and multiply. The impact of the film is more sensuously immediate but less complex. The impersonal plot summary is neither immediate nor complex. It is lifeless.

But not useless. To discuss a novel we have first to describe or recall its plot, however crudely and summarily. This suggests that plot (rather than, say, "character" or "theme" or "atmosphere") is the basic principle of cohesion in any

[1] *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative*. By PETER BROOKS. Oxford University Press, £17.50.

[2] Jonathan Culler, "Defining Narrative Units", in *Style and Structure in Literature*, ed. Roger Fowler (1975).

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novel, a truth rather neglected by modern Anglo-American criticism, including my own, until fairly recently. The reasons for this neglect were complicated [3] but certainly had much to do with the privileging of lyric poetry in the New Criticism and the downgrading of narrative in the critical pronouncements of the great modernist writers. E. M. Forster's weary concession, "Oh dear, yes, the novel must tell a story", Virginia Woolf's attacks on the well-plotted novels of Bennett and Wells, Conrad's defence of Henry James's open, inconclusive endings, T. S. Eliot's welcoming of Joyce's *Ulysses* ("instead of the narrative method, we may now use the mythical method"), are all symptomatic of the modern suspicion of plot as something regressive, falsifying, and market-oriented, a suspicion that conveyed itself to modern academic criticism.

What changed the picture in the mid-sixties was partly the foregrounding of narrative (often in new experimental ways) in post-modern fiction, and partly the critical discovery of continental European structuralism, which revealed a rich tradition of narratological theory going back to the Russian Formalists, with their seminal distinction between *fabula* (the story as it would have been enacted in real space/time) and *sjuzet* (the story as represented in a particular discourse). The New Criticism had managed only a stylistic purchase on fictional form. The work of Shklovsky, Propp, Todorov, Greimas, Genette and the early Barthes offered the possibility of a formalist critique of the novel that included plot —included, indeed, everything.

EVERYTHING, EXCEPT, perhaps, an answer to the fundamental question: why do we, as human beings, apparently *need* narrative? What is it that impels us to tell and receive stories? What is it about the specifically novelistic realisation of narrative that answers to the needs of a modern audience? These are the questions to which Professor Brooks addresses himself. While acknowledging the achievement of formalist narratology, and showing an easy familiarity with its methods and terminology, he believes that "It has too much neglected the temporal dynamics that shape narratives in our reading of them, the play of desire in time that makes us turn pages and strive towards narrative ends." The elegant four-term homologies of Lévi-Strauss and Greimas are satisfying to the analyst in their diagrammatic inclusiveness, but they hardly do justice to our actual experience of texts. Roland Barthes nudged structuralism in this direction with his influential essay of 1966, "Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives", in which the narrative text is dissected into units that are classified as either *nuclei*, opening and closing possibilities for the characters, or *catalysers*, which fill up the spaces between the nuclei, and convey information about the characters, setting, etc. A nucleus cannot be deleted without damaging the coherence of a story, but catalysers are dispensable in this sense.

The model has an undeniable explanatory power, but it tends inevitably to downgrade the importance of the catalysers (which make up the major part of any novel) and to make the reader a rather passive decoder of the narrative message. Significantly, Barthes took as his exemplary text Ian Fleming's *Goldfinger*, belonging to a genre in which the principle function of the catalysers is indeed simply that of postponing the resolution of narrative questions (thus creating suspense) while diverting the reader with information that is mildly interesting merely *as* information (technical, topographical, sexual, etc.). The model is incapable of explaining why we value *A Passage to India*, say, more than *Goldfinger*, or (it amounts to the same thing, but is not so easily brushed aside as bourgeois prejudice) why the former will bear rereading better than the latter. In trying to formulate a dynamic model for the transmission of narrative in the novel, Professor Brooks has taken a leaf or two out of Barthes' later work, *S/Z* (1970), a more elaborate analysis of a richer text (Balzac's "Sarrasine"); but above all he has been inspired by the writings of Sigmund Freud.

AT THE HEART of all narrative there is a paradox, namely that the "end" of a story is both its goal and that which terminates the pleasure it yields. A story begins by arousing an expectation of its end (whether this is neatly closed or ambiguously open is less important than the "sense of an ending" itself), and it is the lure of this projected ending, continuously defined and modified by the narrative questions raised and (partially) resolved in the text, that draws us through its pages. We want to know "what happens." Yet in another sense we do not want to know—if we did, the plot summary would serve our purpose better than the text. We do not even want to be able to predict with certainty what will happen (hence the importance of peripety in all narrative of any sophistication). The postponement of satisfaction, in short, is essential to our enjoyment. Professor Brooks sees an analogy between this paradox and the operation of desire—especially, though not exclusively, sexual desire—as described in the Freudian (and Lacanian) account of the psyche: "a perpetual want for (of) a satisfaction that cannot be offered in reality." He is not the first to perceive this parallel; but no one, I believe, has explored it with such subtlety and perception, or illustrated it more persuasively. Furthermore, he has skilfully integrated the psychoanalytical model with other, more purely literary methods of analysis. *Reading for the Plot* is, indeed, a book that restores one's faith in the future of academic criticism, because it shows that a writer can carry the whole freight of modern literary theory *lightly*, making use of it without being used by it.

For Brooks, the key Freudian text is *Beyond The Pleasure Principle* (1922), where Freud, starting with the enigma that shell-shocked patients from World War I tended to *repeat* rather than escape from their traumatic experiences in dreams, and pondering similar kinds of repetitious behaviour in "normal" life, came to question his previous belief that

[3] They are discussed at greater length in the Afterword to a new edition of my *Language of Fiction* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984; first published 1966).

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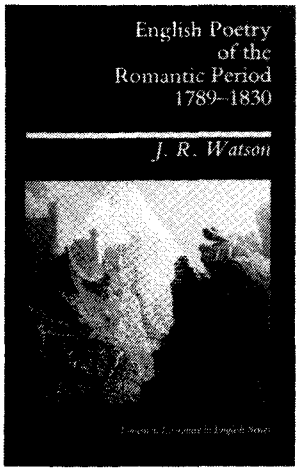

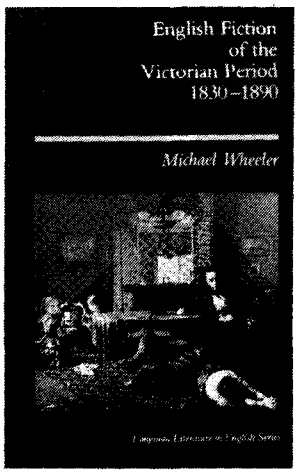

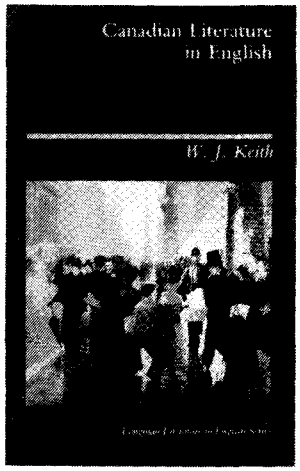

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human beings are basically motivated by the desire for instinctual gratification, and formulated the daring hypothesis of a "death-instinct"—the idea that there is "an urge inherent in organic life to return to an earlier state of things", which is ultimately non-being. In short, "the ultimate aim of life is death", just as the aim of all narrative is to abolish itself in endings. Repetition in psychological life has a clear parallel in all the manifestations of equivalence in literary form, and both have similar functions.

Brooks seizes on Freud's description of this process as one of "binding" the energies of the primal instincts, and speculates:

> "Repetition in all its literary manifestations may in fact work as a 'binding' . . . of textural energies that allows them to be mastered by putting them into serviceable form . . . repetition, repeat, recall, symmetry, all those journeys back in the text, returns to and returns of, that allow us to bind one textual moment to another in terms of similarity or substitution rather than mere contiguity. Textual energy, all that is aroused into expectancy and possibility in a text, can become usable by plot only when it has been bound or formalised."

Behind this passage is an awareness, which Professor Brooks spells out elsewhere, of the relationship between metaphor and metonymy in narrative discourse. The import of a narrative is a "metaphoric" totalisation of its meanings, a realisation that its ending is the-same-as-but-different-from its beginning, but the route by which this goal is reached is a metonymic chain of temporal sequence and cause-and-effect.[4] The metonymic details can, however, acquire a quasi-metaphoric force through the patterning (Forster called it "rhythm") that is the aesthetic equivalent of psychic "binding." In short, the "middle" of a novel is not just a mechanical device for postponing the resolution of its narrative questions, but an instinctive, sense-making detour between the two silences that mark its beginning and its ending.

I MUST NOT GIVE the impression that Professor Brooks' application of his Freudian model is ahistorical. The rise of the novel in the Enlightenment period to become the dominant literary form of the 19th century is related to the declining authority of the "providential plots" of revealed religion, History replacing Theology as the privileged discourse through which human life is to be understood. The centrality of desire to the reading process is related to the prominence of plots of desire (sexual and material ambition) in the classic novels of the 19th century, such as those of Balzac and Stendhal. With the modern novel, self-consciousness and scepticism creep in, as early as Flaubert. Professor Brooks (who is Chairman of the Yale French Department) has a brilliant chapter on *L'Education*

[4] Metonymy is the trope by which A signifies B not by virtue of resemblance (as in metaphor) but by virtue of some spatio-temporal or logical contiguity. The distinction, classically formulated, and applied to the typology of discourse, by Roman Jakobson, is further explored in my *The Modes of Modern Writing* (1977).

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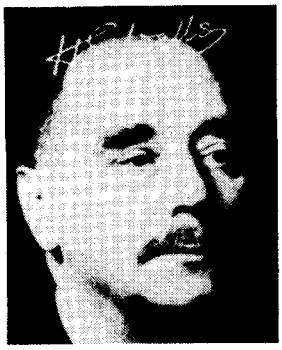
Sentimentale, which shows how it alludes to yet deviates from the Balzacian novel. Ostensibly motivated by the desire for erotic and social success, Flaubert's hero recurrently displays a "problem in desire"—his will, or his nerve, fails him at every crucial moment, he is again and again pushed to the margin of events both private and public, and some of the most memorable passages in the book are shared between the reader and the author "over the head of the protagonist."

In the overtly experimental novels of modernist writers like Conrad (*Heart of Darkness*) and Faulkner (*Absalom, Absalom!*) the reliability of History as an explanatory discourse is brought into question, the lines between "fact" and "fiction" blur, and the transactive, collaborative nature of the relationship between narrator and narratee is foregrounded in the texts themselves. Freud's own writings display the same tendency, according to Brooks. The early classic case histories remind us strongly of the Sherlock Holmes stories, in which the genius of the detective/analyst solves the "crime" of neurotic symptoms by connecting together individually meaningless metonymic clues to form a sequence that leads back to the culprit of a childhood trauma. But when Freud admitted (as he did in the later additions to the case history of the Wolf Man) that the trauma might itself be a fiction constructed by the patient, he threw the whole psychoanalytic enterprise *en abîme*. No wonder Freud's ideas have been kept in currency by writers and literary critics rather than by scientists and doctors. The human need they satisfy is essentially the same as that served by every kind of narrative, from religious myths to novels. To say that is no insult to Freud, because, as Professor Brooks reminds us, narrative is one of the fundamental human tools for making sense of the world.

Fictions & Facts

On H. G. Wells—By BERNARD BERGONZI



WELLS WEARS WELL: the past few months have produced a variety of new books about him or new editions of books by him. The reasons for this revival, or should one say survival, of interest are not immediately apparent. It may be that Wells's earliest work—the apocalyptic scientific romances of the *fin de siècle*—blends easily into the gloomy global forebodings of the closing years of our own century. But it seems just as likely that the optimism and energy of mind of Wells's later writings suggest that there might be a way forward from our present troubles and that doom may not be inescapable (though Wells himself, in the final depressed post-Hiroshima year of his life, came to believe that it was).

Wells offers the potentially appealing spectacle of an accomplished and entertaining fiction-writer who was not afraid of ideas and opinions, though he made a few ideas go a long way and was continually changing his opinions. He thus provides a change both from the artistic rigour of the canonical modernists, who are now so much the object of academic concentration, and from the more purely literary concerns of his fellow-Edwardians, Galsworthy and Bennett, who, like Wells, were rubbished by Virginia Woolf and D. H. Lawrence in the 1920s. Wells had a quick, well-stocked, and untidy mind, and little sense of limitation; an element in his appeal is that of the cheeky chappie who doesn't mind what he says and does, and who is willing to have a go at practically anything. Such a figure has evident attractions in an age of strict professional specialisms and institutional role-models. There are times when Wells's life looks as interesting as his writings; the two converge in what seems to me to be the best of his later books, the two-volume *Experiment in Autobiography* of 1934, which is now reprinted though without the photographs in the original edition.[1]

John Batchelor's short study of Wells [2] is a contribution to the kind of series that all self-respecting academic publishers now reckon to have on their lists: this one, from the Cambridge University Press, is called "British and Irish Authors: Introductory Critical Studies." Such books have their educational value, though there is an implicit contradiction in the idea of "critical introduction": "criticism" implies a discussion between equals who are both in possession of the text, while "introduction" suggests a reader who is not familiar with the text and needs to be led into it. Books of this sort have inherent generic instabilities, apparent in a combination of simplistic plot-summary and sophisticated interpretation implying a knowledge of existing debates. John Batchelor handles the form well; he writes with clarity and succinctness and a pleasant enthusiasm for Wells's work. His emphasis is literary; he is mainly concerned with Wells as a fiction writer rather than as thinker or social reformer, though he acknowledges that the ideas can't be altogether ignored. There is not much room in his book for very new readings or arguments, but he does make fresh points about familiar texts which are worth pondering; he defends the "Weena" episode in *The Time Machine*, for instance, which I and other critics have condemned, and he

[1] *Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (Since 1866)*. By H. G. WELLS. Faber and Faber, 2 vols, £8.95 each.

[2] *H. G. Wells*. By JOHN BATCHELOR. Cambridge University Press, £19.50, paper £6.50.

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shows how *Love and Mr. Lewisham* has Jamesian virtues, even though James couldn't perceive them (an inherently likely point, since when this novel came out in 1900 Wells was a whole-hearted admirer of James's fiction).

Like other writers on Wells, Batchelor finds it easy to admire and defend the fiction of 1895-1910, which is divided between scientific romances, the beginnings of utopian fantasy, and comic or poignant realism; or combinations of all these elements. Thereafter Wells increasingly regarded fiction as a vehicle for ideas, and launched into what he called "discussion" novels or "prig" novels. Batchelor acknowledges that these have not for the most part survived their particular occasions; but he makes out a good case for the literary quality of a few of the later novels; those which were written when Wells was not in too much of a hurry and was able to recapture some of his old imaginative power, like *The Croquet Player* of 1936. As it happens, two of Wells's post-1910 novels have been reissued in paperback with introductions by Christopher Priest: *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* (1916), which expressed Wells's response to the First World War and became a best-seller, earning him a great deal of money; and *Christina Alberta's Father* (1925).[3]

IT IS A GOOD THING to have these novels available again, even if they don't represent the very best of Wells's fiction, and to have a new edition of the *Experiment in Autobiography*, which, like much autobiographical and biographical writing, has many quasi-fictional elements. A. O. J. Cockshut has an interesting chapter on it in his recent excellent study of autobiographical form, *The Art of Autobiography in 19th and 20th Century England*.[4] It provides a good brief discussion of Wells in general, though he is sharper and less sympathetic than Batchelor. Like other commentators, Cockshut is liable to see Wells's scientific optimism as more whole-hearted and undivided than it is in fact. He says Wells should have read the famous lecture *Evolution and Ethics* delivered in 1893 by his old teacher and guru, T. H. Huxley, which argued that there is no necessary relationship between evolutionary development and human moral progress. I am confident that the young Wells *had* read it, and some such conviction underlay the dark vision of *The Island of Dr Moreau*. Batchelor plausibly suggests that Wells never wholly lost this vision; it returned to him on those occasions when he temporarily lost confidence in the power of science to improve humanity, and it reappeared in some of his blacker fiction of the 1920s and '30s.

Cockshut is very acute about the way Wells presents himself in the autobiography: "a late Victorian Sam Weller, drawing on a wide experience and an unlimited power of aphorism and humorous comparison to minister to his unbounded appetite for life." Wells, Cockshut remarks, came to maturity in "the only period known to history when life and its aims and meanings appeared to be simple and palpable." He says of one passage, where Wells is describing his escape from the drapers' shop where he had been put to work as a boy: "it is redolent of that Victorian sense of adventure, of infinite possibility, of a world really open to talents, that was never felt so strongly again after 1914." Cockshut writes perceptively about the exhilarating immediacy which is characteristic of the *Experiment in Autobiography* and is unchecked or qualified by any reflectiveness:

> "All this is being written by a man well on in his sixties; and his narrative is in striking contrast to most written by men of that age. Much of it could have been written thirty years nearer the events it describes. It has the immediacy of felt experience; and for the most part it lacks the patina of time and reflection, the mournful or illuminating sense of difference between past and present. It is doubtful whether Wells developed inwardly much after his twenty-fifth year. . . . His content is always superior to his power of analysis. The fascination of reading this book is that we are left to do the most difficult and fundamental work of the autobiographer for ourselves."

Experiment in Autobiography is a very long book, but Wells still had to leave out a lot about his life, particularly his many relationships with women, for too many of them were still alive in 1934. Nevertheless, he began work on another volume of autobiography, setting down the major love affairs of his life. He evidently took it seriously, for he continued to work on it even though there was no hope of publication for a long time to come. After 50 years mortality has finally done its work, no one survives to be offended, and the book now appears as a postscript to the autobiography.[5] It has many of the qualities of his earlier work: sharpness of recall, immediacy, good temper, and an unruffled air of self-satisfaction and self-justification. The title is perhaps a misnomer, for Wells was not often in love and did not claim to be, though *Wells and Women* might have been a little bleak. If the spirit is not particularly passionate it is not at all prurient either, and the general tone is that of the brisk, pedestrian but observant Edwardian memoir-writer, recalling not *Interesting Men I Have Met* but *Interesting Women I Have Slept With*.

In many respects the most interesting and certainly the most necessary woman in Wells's life was his second wife Amy Catherine, always known as "Jane", and the book opens with his tribute to her written after her death from cancer in 1927. They were always very fond of each other, and after they had been married some years came to an arrangement which enabled Wells to have the best of all possible worlds. Jane was not particularly interested in sex and was quite willing for Wells to go elsewhere for it; she was prepared to tolerate his affairs, provided he told her about

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[3] *Mr. Britling Sees It Through. Christina Alberta's Father.* By H. G. WELLS. Hogarth Press, £3.95 each.

[4] *The Art of Autobiography in 19th and 20th Century England.* By A. O. J. COCKSHUT. Yale University Press, $20.95, £10.95. I have said more about this book in the *London Review of Books* (21 February 1985). It is interestingly complemented by *Patterns of Experience in Autobiography*. By SUSANNA EGAN. University of North Carolina Press, $19.95, £23.95. This covers some of the same ground but does not discuss Wells.

[5] *H. G. Wells in Love: Postscript to An Experiment in Autobiography*. Edited by G. P. WELLS. Faber and Faber, £8.95.

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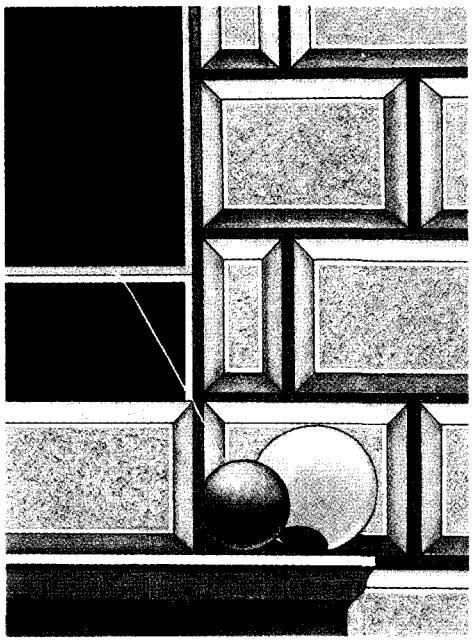

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them and she did not actively dislike the women in question. And she was very happy to go on managing his domestic and literary business. Wells, for his part, undertook to stick by her permanently and keep a home in being. It seems to have worked very well in practice and both parties were careful to observe the ground-rules. Without doubt, the roving impulsive Wells would have got into all sorts of messes without Jane's complaisance—he didn't wholly escape them, but they were kept within bounds—and might have had a less uniformly successful and prosperous career. Jane Wells remains an enigma, a mild-mannered but tough-minded lady who amused herself by lightly annotating letters from Wells's mistresses with sardonic underlinings and exclamation marks in the margin.

THE LOVER WHO TRIED HARDEST to rock Wells's domestic boat was Rebecca West, a formidable personality and the one woman in his life who was manifestly his equal in talents and intellectual powers. She was born in Edinburgh as Cicily Fairfield, started to train as an actress, switched to journalism, called herself "Rebecca West" after an Ibsen heroine, and began making a name as a writer at a precociously early age.

She first came to Wells's attention in 1912, when she was not quite twenty and he was forty-six. She published a mocking, witty and very intelligent review of one of his novels, which roused his curiosity rather than his resentment. Jane, too, was amused and invited the young reviewer to visit them at Easton Glebe, Wells's Essex home. Wells and Rebecca West met again for literary discussions and matters took a predictable course; in the beginning it was Rebecca who seems to have made the advances, for she fell heavily in love with Wells sometime during 1913. At first he was reluctant to get involved, for he had already had problems with ardent intellectual girls, but before long he succumbed and they began a relationship which was to last for ten years. Its most immediate—and enduring—result was a son, who was born in August 1914; according to Wells on the 4th, the day on which Britain declared war on Germany and the old world finally collapsed.

The son grew up to be the writer Anthony West, and his book on Wells is one of the oddest studies that anyone has ever written of his father.[6] It begins *in medias res* with the author's birth at Hunstanton in Norfolk, where Wells had despatched Rebecca to be far from prying metropolitan eyes. Anthony West says that he was born a few minutes into 5th August, and in the manner of higher journalism he cross-cuts to Wells a hundred miles away in his study at Easton Glebe, instantly responding to the public rather than the private event by writing an article called "The War That Will End War", while in London Harold Nicolson as a young diplomat is walking across St James's Park from the Foreign Office to the German Embassy with the passports of the Ambassador and his staff.

As a biography of H. G. Wells Anthony West's book has its interest and value, and it complements and sometimes corrects the life by Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie published in 1973. He is particularly interesting on Wells's childhood and the characters and lives of Wells's parents, which he has researched in some detail, and offers helpful correction of points which other people have got wrong. For instance, the Sussex country house where Wells's mother was housekeeper, which provided the model for "Bladesover" in *Tono-Bungay*, should be called "Uppark" and not "Up Park"; this was Wells's error and one which other writers have duly followed, like myself and John Batchelor.

Yet Anthony West's book is not primarily or exclusively a biography; it is also a fierce polemic directed at his mother. His book has some of the immediacy of his father's *Experiment in Autobiography*. Events which took place sixty or seventy years ago are recalled in vivid detail, either from his own early memory or his imaginative reconstruction of them, and made to seem as if they had only just happened. This is the second time West has been over this ground. The first was in his novel *Heritage*, a fictionalised account of his parents' relationship which was published in America thirty years ago but did not come out here until after Rebecca West's death in 1983. West presents his mother as a fascinating monster: over-emotional, unpredictable, possessive, self-dramatising, given to elaborate fantasies about herself and ultimately mendacious. He is convinced that after the break-up of her long affair with Wells she embarked on a campaign to make sure that posterity got her version of the story rather than Wells's. So, West asserts, she began to fake the record, rewriting, doctoring or suppressing documents, doing everything to make herself appear in a favourable light.

The scholar who fell for it all was Gordon N. Ray, whose book *H. G. Wells and Rebecca West* (1974) was written with Dame Rebecca's approval and cooperation. A major impulse of West's book seems to have been to rebut Ray's study, which is certainly more sympathetic overall to Rebecca West than to Wells, though Anthony West never mentions Ray by name. Nevertheless the varied references to "an American author . . . an American authority . . . an American academic" and the actual unascribed quotations from Ray's book leave no doubt whom he has in mind. West takes every opportunity of correcting Ray, or his mother, on points of fact. For instance, Ray writes that when Anthony was eight he suffered from a respiratory disease which was at first thought to be tuberculosis but in the end proved to be an unusual form of pneumonia. For Anthony West this is one more example of his mother's lying; it *was* tuberculosis, and he still has scars on his lungs to prove it.

West pounces on such instances with the forensic skills of a barrister defending a weakish case. One reads his account with the combination of fascination and embarrassment with which a stranger might observe a bitter, enduring and painfully articulate family quarrel. Wells was a kind and in his own way dutiful father to Anthony, and Rebecca West, like other highly intellectual women, even without being placed in her peculiarly difficult personal circumstances, may not have found motherhood a very easy or fulfilling role. All the same,

[6] *H. G. Wells: Aspects of a Life*. By ANTHONY WEST. Hutchinson, £12.95.

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TEMENOS 6

A Review Devoted to the Arts of the Imagination

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West's partisanship seems excessive.

Eventually Rebecca rebelled against her hole-and-corner existence and the small amount of Wells's company she actually enjoyed, and began demanding that he divorce Jane and marry her. His set-up with Jane was too satisfactory for him to consider anything of the sort, and West is very scathing about his mother's naive presumption. Still, as a high bid by a trapped woman it made sense, and Wells's refusal eventually led to her leaving him. Despite Anthony West's eager point-scoring, one's sympathies inevitably go to Rebecca. Although money was not a problem, she had to undergo the difficulties of the one-parent family in a less tolerant age than ours; she was domestically inexperienced and had trouble keeping servants.

West writes throughout as if his parents were equals; so they were intellectually, but not in other respects. Wells had all the advantages of a highly successful middle-aged man, twenty-six years older than his young mistress. And despite his amiable personal qualities, he was remarkably selfish. Even the sympathetic John Batchelor remarks on his "lack of moral balance, his ruthless selfishness and his emotional obtuseness." Wells himself shows nothing of his son's resentment against Rebecca West. In the muffled but affectionate chapter about her in *H. G. Wells in Love*, he remarks complacently but decently of the latter stages of their relationship:

> "I ought to have liberated her; I realise I got much the best of our relationship; but there was no one else to take her place with me, and she was fond of me as well as resentful and there was no one to take my place with her."

Wells and Rebecca West were both fantasists, and it is not surprising that aspects of their situation found their way into novels they each published in 1922, towards the end of their affair. Wells's *The Secret Places of the Heart* is a very slight "discussion" novel; but, Anthony West remarks, "despite all its defects, it remains a book which no one who undertakes a biography of my father can afford to ignore." Wells puts himself into it as Sir Richmond Hardy, an eminent public man, an expert on fuel, who is labouring to impart some sense and rationality into a foolish society. He has a long-term mistress, a brilliant, attractive, possessive young artist, called, puzzlingly, Martin Leeds. On a brief holiday in the west of England Sir Richmond meets up with a rich, good-looking, intelligent, articulate American girl who is touring with a female companion; she is known only as Miss Grammont or "V.V." She and Sir Richmond discover a great mental rapport, and begin to discover a physical one, though it doesn't get very far. The three of them spend four days together, all very properly, during which time Miss Grammont and Sir Richmond exchange declarations of love and one, or possibly two, chaste kisses. Then she leaves for France to meet her father, an oil tycoon with whom Sir Richmond is bitterly at odds on matters of public policy. At the end of the book, in a ludicrous conclusion, Sir Richmond, the weary titan, is dead from overwork and self-neglect. Then "Martin", who is clearly based on Rebecca West, appears for the first time in the narrative and engages in an operatic display of grief by his dead body.

Gordon N. Ray reports that Rebecca found the novel very funny and that even her mother, who strongly disapproved of her daughter's association with Wells, was reduced to "hopeless laughter." Here Anthony West pounces on another instance of his mother's mendacity; how could Mrs Fairfield have been reduced to "hopeless" or any sort of laughter at this book, when she had died in August 1921 and it was not published until the spring of 1922? A palpable hit, it seems.

Nevertheless, West is throwing stones out of a greenhouse in his discussion of *The Secret Places of the Heart*, which is so inaccurate that it makes me wonder if he has ever read it properly. He writes of Sir Richmond and Miss Grammont: "he calls her his dear wife and mate when he kisses her for the first time. They have been together for a full week by then, and have a full week more to look forward to." In fact, they have been together for two days when Sir Richmond calls Miss Grammont "my dear wife and mate", but only in a dream; the next night he does kiss her, near Tintern Abbey, but he doesn't call her that. The two days of circumspect spiritual passion which follow are enlarged by West into "a week of motoring from place to place, sightseeing, eating meals in hotel dining-rooms and bedding down in hotel bedrooms." A careful examination of the relevant part of Wells's very diffuse text suggests that Sir Richmond and Miss Grammont *may* have slept together on their last night, at a hotel in Bath, though it seems unlikely to me as their mood is one of renunciation rather than consummation. The passage is inexplicit and the question has to be regarded as open. West's account of a week of thriving copulation is very wide of the mark.

Rebecca West's *The Judge* is a much more substantial affair, though too dramatically uneven to be a successful novel: Wells's description of it as "an immense mass of unequal but often gorgeous writing" is pretty fair. It looks as if Rebecca West unloaded a good deal of personal fantasy in this novel (which is currently available from Virago).

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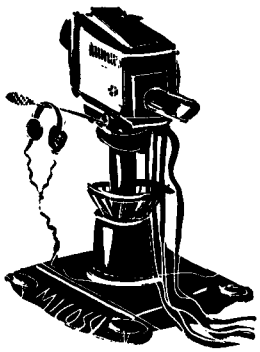
The best parts are the early chapters which describe a young Edinburgh girl, Ellen Melville, who is clever, sharp-tongued, naive, a dedicated suffragette and eager for knowledge and intellectual life. This, I assume, is a very engaging and successful fictional version of the young Cicily Fairfield. When the novel leaves Edinburgh it declines sharply in artistic quality, though it remains interesting as a human document. Rebecca West then puts an older version of herself into the novel as Marion Yaverland, whose son Richard marries Ellen. Richard was born out of wedlock, and some of the things Marion tells Ellen must derive directly from Rebecca West's own situation with the young Anthony: "You have to make servants like you so that they won't give notice when they hear the village gossip, because you must have a well-run house for your child. You have to make people like you so that they will let their children play with yours." Marion herself, who is short, dark, and very intense, theatrical and self-dramatising, seems at least as direct a projection of Rebecca West as Mr Britling, Sir Richmond and many similar personae are of H. G. Wells.

There is too much unassimilated and unfocused fantasy in Marion for the character to be anything other than a cypher, and something similar is true of the Byronic figure of Richard. At one point Marion reflects, "Every mother is a judge who sentences the children for the sins of the father", and Rebecca West felt that this remark was so significant that she used it as an epigraph to the novel. Is this what Anthony West finds so hard to forgive, or forget?

Greene on the Screen

Graham Greene's Film Scripts—By PHILIP FRENCH



IN 1983 GRAHAM GREENE heard that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer were preparing to sell a draft script he had written back in the mid-1940s, and dimly recalled having given them something covering a couple of pages. The British publisher Anthony Blond subsequently acquired world rights in what proved to be a moderately well-polished text of around 30,000 words. With a mixture of canniness and generosity he allowed Greene to look it over. The response must have exceeded Blond's wildest dreams. The novelist not merely gave *The Tenth Man*[1] his imprimatur, calling it superior to the scenario of *The Third Man*, but suggested a co-publication deal between Blond and The Bodley Head, thus subsuming it into the official *oeuvre*. Furthermore, the retrieval of this forgotten text persuaded Greene to go through his files and there discover two contemporary film treatments of a less substantial, but equally interesting kind, called *Jim Braddon and the War Criminal* and *Nobody to Blame*. These are incorporated into a characteristically pithy introduction, and help bulk out a slim book.

The Tenth Man has been highly praised by the literary critics, to whom it has been exclusively entrusted for review. With the odd vague reference to the influence of the cinema on Greene, they have discussed the unfilmed MGM project as a novella, and pretty well ignored the other pieces. This is, I think, a mistake, and is at one with a general failure to ask certain questions about the provenance of this book and its situation within the context of the 1940s cinema. *The Tenth Man* is not, in my view, a major addition to the Greene canon. The author has made his home in France these past 30 years, but as a writer he is not at home there. None of his French fictions is satisfying, possibly because the country is insufficiently distant and exotic, while his earnest, polemical pamphlet *J'Accuse*, for all its sincerity, established somewhat painfully that his long residence on the *Côte d'azur* had left him a credulous stranger. Nevertheless, and taking for granted the readability of the *The Tenth Man* (for the exile of Antibes has always rivalled his onetime neighbour at the Villa Mauresque[2]), the real interest of this book is the way the three texts throw light on Greene's style, and illuminate his relationship to the cinema.

First a word about the texts. All three have obvious literary antecedents, but essentially they belong to cinematic genres, or sub-genres, familiar to screenwriters and Hollywood script departments. All, had they been made, would have easily fitted into current movie cycles. *Jim Braddon*, the exciting tale of an American mistaken for a fugitive Nazi in Mexico, has the staple ingredients of the *film noir* thriller (including amnesia) and belongs to a cycle of pictures about hidden war-criminals triggered by the Nuremberg Tribunal (the most famous perhaps being Orson Welles's *The Stranger*) and given a new lease of life by the Eichmann trial.

The central character of *The Tenth Man*, a well-off French lawyer called Chavel, saves his life in a German prison camp by giving all he owns to a young artisan, Janvier, who leaves his new wealth to his mother and sister, then takes Chavel's place before a firing squad. (The scenes in gaol, where lots are drawn to see who'll be the ten men to be killed as

[1] *The Tenth Man*. By GRAHAM GREENE. The Bodley Head and Anthony Blond, £6.95.

[2] The novelist-narrator of *The End of the Affair* (1951) remarks of an interview with a little-magazine critic:

> "Patronisingly in the end he would place me—probably a little above Maugham because Maugham is popular and I have not yet committed that crime."

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hostages, anticipate the fascination with gambling that occurs in several post-War Greene novels, and must have been written just before the Russian Roulette memoir, "The Revolver in the Corner Cupboard.")

Chavel eventually leaves the camp and, dressed as a tramp and bearing the false name Charlot, returns to his former family home outside Paris, now occupied by the dead Janvier's mother and sister. He falls in love with the latter, but his troubled idyll is interrupted by the arrival of the confidence-trickster and murderer, Carosse, who has heard of the prison-camp transaction and pretends to be the remorseful former owner Chavel.

The story has themes and incidents in common with *Lord Jim* and *Under Western Eyes*, not to mention *Enoch Arden* and the Martin Guerre story, and is in a literary tradition of tales about returning combatants that goes back to Homer's *Odyssey*. But anyone in Hollywood at the time would have identified it as one of the homecoming pictures that every studio had on the stocks at the time—pictures about servicemen coming back from foreign parts, often after periods in captivity, to resume domestic responsibilities and family relationships with women who had been as much affected as they had by separation and social change. The cycle reached its peak with Goldwyn's *The Best Years of Our Lives* in 1946.

The third script, *Nobody to Blame*, is an espionage comedy, taking as its hero a Singer Sewing Machine salesman in the Baltic States just before the outbreak of World War II. To supplement his income, he pretends to run a non-existent network of spies for the British Secret Service, and then finds himself dangerously involved with the international Intelligence establishment. Similar if somewhat less ingenious plots are to be found in wartime vehicles for Will Hay, George Formby, and Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne, though in the immediate post-War years there was a reaction against war comedies and spy spoofs that lasted for nearly a decade.

The Tenth Man, Greene says, was written under "a slave contract" which he signed with MGM at the end of the War to ensure some security for himself and his family. Greene does not go into further detail about this oxymoronic "slave contract" beyond mentioning that it was arranged by "my friend Ben Goetz", head of MGM's British operation. How much was he paid, how long was its duration (the proof copy of *The Tenth Man* says it was signed in 1944, the published version says 1945), what did he have to deliver, to whom was he responsible?

The answers to these questions, even if Greene cannot recall them, are to be found in the MGM archives, and the publishers of this book should have sought them out. It could not have been an especially onerous contract if Greene was free to discuss film projects with other producers and to embark in 1947 on the films of *Brighton Rock* and *The Fallen Idol*. A researcher might also have discovered what MGM thought of the script and why they did not film it. Anthony Burgess, reviewing the book in *The Observer*, heaps scorn upon the studio heads for their ignorance and insensitivity: "It was, and still probably is, their job to make a film of *The Tenth Man*."

Now there is, I suspect, a good reason why MGM did not film *The Tenth Man*. If Greene delivered this outline in 1945 it would have come while the company was preparing a film provisionally called *A Woman of His Own*, a vehicle for Greer Garson and Robert Montgomery. This was another version of a once-celebrated German novel, *Karl and Anna* by Leonard Frank, filmed at Ufa in 1928 as *Heimkehr* (*Homecoming*), with Erich Pommer as producer and Joe May as director. In the original novel and film, two German soldiers become friends as prisoners-of-war on the Eastern Front, and then escape in 1918, making their separate ways home. The unmarried one has heard so much of his new friend's wife that he feels intimately acquainted with her, and when he arrives at the other's farm, he falls in love with her. The affair is fraught with guilt because he believes he has been responsible for her husband's death.

Recognising that English-speaking audiences would not be sympathetically disposed towards a tale of German soldiers, MGM turned it into a story of Frenchmen returning from Nazi captivity. Endless script problems arose, half-a-dozen writers and three directors (George Cukor, Jack Conway, Mervyn LeRoy) worked on the project, and Robert Montgomery dropped out. After a further change of title to *Sacred and Profane*, the picture eventually appeared in 1947 as *Desire Me*, the only major MGM production to be released without a credit to any director.

So anyone at MGM reading Greene's script would have noticed obvious similiarities of plot, setting and mood with the current project. Had they been confronted by it in 1946, when *Desire Me* was shaping up as a legendary disaster, they might have fled screaming down the corridor, the way Sam Goldwyn is said to have done after reading Maeterlinck's first screenplay. Goldwyn, the story has it, was shouting, "Mein Gott, the hero is a bee!" The MGM executive would have been shrieking: "Christ, another movie about two French prisoners-of-war!"

There is a further possible link between *The Tenth Man* and *Desire Me* that might possibly have been spotted by an assiduous MGM reader. If Greene unconsciously drew on his memories of *Lord Jim*, *Under Western Eyes*, and other classics of the Eng. Lit. syllabus, it seems likely that this dedicated student of the movies, attender of film societies, and reader and writer of film criticism, would have seen Pommer's *Heimkehr*. In his classic study *The Spirit of Film*, Béla Balázs devoted a page to a particular montage sequence in *Heimkehr* where the hero's feet become the man himself as they tramp across Europe. There is, perhaps coincidentally, emphasis in *The Tenth Man* on disintegrating footwear, and there is a sentence that is redolent of the kind of montage sequence Balázs described:

> "All over France men were picking their way home, from prison camps, from hiding places, from foreign parts. If one possessed a God's eye view of France, one would have detected a constant movement of tiny grains moving like dust across a floor shaped like a map."

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In his *Sunday Times* review of *The Tenth Man*, John Carey, Merton Professor of English at Oxford, described the novella as "very short and a masterpiece—tapped out in that lean, sharp-eyed prose that film-work taught Greene to perfect." But at that time Greene had only co-scripted two mediocre movies and written the commentaries for two documentaries.

In his perceptive study of Greene's novels, *Saints, Sinners and Comedians*,[3] Roger Sharrock, Emeritus Professor of English at University College, London, observes:

> "Whether or not it was because his period of film-reviewing and script-writing was over, the novels written after 1950 are less cinematic in scene and montage. The influence of the cinema has been absorbed and contained."

But in fact after 1950 Greene was to be involved in the writing and production of half-a-dozen further movies, and to embark on a successful career as a playwright.

Neither of these eminent literary critics appears to have asked himself this question: why is it that the British novelist who has been most consistently involved with the cinema (as moviegoer, critic, writer, producer) and most often cited as an author of distinction influenced by the movies, should have written book after book that a succession of gifted adaptors failed to turn into films of anything like comparable distinction? I have often pondered this question, and written about it on several occasions. The book under discussion, I believe, helps provide an answer.

Confronted by *The Tenth Man*, most directors would throw up their hands in despair. A very skilled screenwriter would have to be called in. The imagery is consistently literary and abstract in a characteristic Greeneian mode. A priest "rubber-stamped the air like a notary" and "packed the sacrament in his bag as a plumber packs his tools." A character stands "like a page of type waiting to be read." As a man and a woman go along a country lane, "his feet moved steadily towards their end like a lawyer's argument: hers were uneven like a succession of interjections." And so on.

Similes and metaphors of this kind remind one of those fancy stage directions, quite impossible to realise in the theatre, that J. M. Barrie and Tennessee Williams would put into the published versions of their plays. Moreover, there is no indication in *The Tenth Man* of how the moral implications of the story's climax could be presented dramatically through visual images and economic use of dialogue. The script flies in the face of the advice the British director John Boorman gives his writers. In a diary recorded during the making of his film *The Emerald Forest*, Boorman remarks that he is

> "opposed to the treatment becoming a literary document with shape and style. I always tell writers that scripts should be badly written in the sense that the elegant description, the fine turn of phrase, distances a script from a film."

Then, the names in *The Tenth Man* have a deliberate literary jokiness that would, when explained, scarcely have appealed to the front-office at MGM. The main character, and the man who subsequently becomes his impersonator and antagonist, are respectively named Chavel and Carosse, i.e. (almost) horse and carriage. But Chavel, when he falls on hard times upon leaving the prison camp, bears papers proclaiming his new identity as Jean-Louis Charlot. "Charlot" is the name by which Charlie Chaplin is known in France, and to underline this Chavel reflects that "one failure of nerve had ingrained the face like a tramp's", and a couple of pages later Greene slyly alludes to the dream sequence in *The Gold Rush* where the tramp entertains the girls with dancing rolls: "He hadn't eaten more than a couple of rolls for thirty-six hours."

In 1945 Hollywood, Chaplin was becoming, if he was not already, something of a pariah, and was cordially loathed by Louis B. Mayer (with whom he had once come to blows) and his right-wing colleagues at MGM. As an Americanophobe and a dedicated supporter of Chaplin, Greene well knew this. He also heartily disliked Mayer and everything he stood for, and gave full vent to this in "Film Lunch", a satirical account (tinged with anti-Semitism) of a London press reception for Mayer in 1937. One wonders whether beneath the elegant surface *The Tenth Man* is a deliberate act of defiance, and indeed whether that elegant surface may not be part of it.

Jim Braddon and the War Criminal and *Nobody to Blame* are strikingly different in character and texture. They show just how simply and cinematically Greene can think. *Nobody to Blame*, the longer piece, written originally for the director Cavalcanti, is a model of lucidity. In fifteen pages of spare prose, Greene outlines a wonderful comic plot. We now see that something did emerge from the trip he made to the Baltic states in 1937 (described in the introduction to the Collected Edition version of *A Gun for Sale*), though the final form *Nobody to Blame* took was to be a comedy of the Cold War in Latin America rather than the run-up to World War II in Eastern Europe—*Our Man in Havana*.

The five-page *Jim Braddon* is an exhilarating encounter with Greene the cinéphile and cinéaste, as well as the descendant by blood and literary affinity of Robert Louis Stevenson. The outline begins: "There is an old legend that somewhere in the world every man has his double. This is the strange story of Jim Braddon." Braddon is a Philadelphia salesman who gets mistaken for Schreiber, "the Nazi Inspector-General of the Concentration Camps", and becomes a hunted man. With no metaphors or literary flourishes, and only one line of dialogue, Greene whisks us along, describing in a vivid, concrete style a movie that appears to be unfolding in his head.

When Braddon falls into the clutches of a fascist gang in Mexico:

> "Among them are a brother and sister—a little, sadistic pop-eyed Mexican whom we will call Peter for his likeness to Peter Lorre and his shifty, beautiful sister whom we will call Laureen [*sic*] for obvious reasons of casting."

[3] *Saints, Sinners and Comedians*. By Roger Sharrock. Burns & Oates £15.00, paper £5.95; University of Notre Dame Press. $19.95.

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Apart from the professional screenwriter's, and movie-fan's, way of thinking in terms of specific stars, these references suggest that the scenario might have been written with Warner Brothers in mind, for Peter Lorre and Lauren Bacall were both under contract to that studio. An admirer of Peter Lorre, Greene had thought him wasted as the "hairless Mexican" in Hitchcock's *The Secret Agent*. Lorre also appeared as the villain Contreras in the Warner Brothers version of *The Confidential Agent*, which also starred Lauren Bacall. Greene regards this as one of the few satisfactory adaptations of his novels and was much taken by Lauren Bacall, defending against contemporary critics her performance as an English heroine. *The Confidential Agent* was not released until November 1945, which helps towards dating this script.

Reading *Jim Braddon and the War Criminal*, I am reminded of the scene in Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon* where Monroe Stahr explains to the condescending British novelist George Boxley (i.e. Aldous Huxley) the craft of screenwriting. Stahr catches Boxley's attention by ad-libbing a story full of mysterious graphic detail, then suddenly breaks off.

> "'Go on', said Boxley smiling. 'What happens?'
> 'I don't know', said Stahr. 'I was just making pictures.'
> Boxley felt he was being put in the wrong.
> 'It's just melodrama', he said.
> 'Not necessarily', said Stahr. 'In any case, nobody has moved violently or talked cheap dialogue or had any facial expression whatsoever. There was only one bad line and a writer like you could improve it. But you were interested.'"

Greene certainly holds our attention with *Jim Braddon*, and when he hits a difficult passage, he leaps ahead like William Hart on his pony Fritz jumping over a ravine, saying "It is unnecessary in this short summary to work out his next adventures in detail: somehow he makes his way to a railroad and gets on a train to Mexico City", or "They plan a rescue—what their plan is I don't know myself yet. Violent and desperate, it offers one chance in a hundred." And he ends the treatment with us sitting beside him in the cinema of his mind:

> "After that there's just the reaching for the coats under the seats. Anyone in the stalls could tell you what happens now."

A couple of years after this, Carol Reed proved to the doubting Greene that the audience *could* be kept in their seats to the very end by introducing, against his writer's advice, the famous long walk from the cemetery that concludes *The Third Man*.

READING *The Tenth Man* after *Jim Braddon*, one wonders whether it too was initially cast in a simple, non-literary form. Perhaps Greene's "entertainments", from *Stamboul Train* onwards, were conceived thus in his mind as imaginary movies, if not necessarily written down like *Jim Braddon*.

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The book suggests that while drawing upon certain cinematic techniques, such as the flashback, cross-cutting, and various angles of vision (many anticipated by Dickens, Hugo and Hardy), Greene positively works against his deep film-sense while composing a literary narrative. In other words, it might be argued that part of his art as a novelist resides, paradoxically, in making his books as difficult to film as possible.

Romantic Pursuits

The Art of Rosamond Lehmann—By MARGARET WALTERS

LOVE IS Rosamond Lehmann's subject—love disappointed, defeated, lost. Her novels, from the best-selling *Dusty Answer* (1927) to her major achievement, *The Echoing Grove* (1953), dig deeper and deeper into one central theme, the compulsive power of romantic love and its pain. Readers, particularly women readers, have always identified passionately with her passionate heroines. ("Oh, Miss Lehmann, that's my story exactly.") And she has paid the price for this popularity. Reviewers have tended to treat her, uneasily, as a romantic, working in that minor genre, the "woman's novel." (The dismissive label suggests something over-intense, narrowly personal, probably humourless and escapist: the sort of thing that would appeal, say, to the adolescent heroine of *Invitation to the Waltz*, who likes to curl up on the schoolroom sofa "reading *East Lynne* and eating nut-milk chocolate.") Yet at the age of 84, with her work successfully reissued by Penguin and Virago, Lehmann is being recognised, increasingly, as a serious, perhaps a major writer—and that because of, not in spite of, these "feminine" preoccupations.

Gillian Tindall's thoughtful and affectionate study[1] marks an important stage in this revaluation. She offers a sensible, sensitive guide through what she calls "Lehmann land", tracing the recurring characters and situations, the landscapes and images that echo almost obsessionally through the novels. Lehmann has "the gift of making the reader feel that a novel is a testament of personal reality"; she often refers back without much disguise to her own life, and her heroines have an undeniable autobiographical authenticity. It's hardly surprising that Lehmann has attracted gossipy attention from what she calls "spotters", eager to track her characters down to real life sources. But—in Lehmann's own words—"what in life remains only potential is often the most potent element in fiction, rather than what actually happens." Tindall is at her most illuminating when she discusses the devious and unpredictable links between Lehmann's life and her art, and emphasises the subtle calculation and complicated structures of the novels.

Tindall, rightly anxious to insist on Lehmann's stature, dismisses too easily the idea that she is a romantic. "The whole ethos of Lehmann-land runs directly counter to that of the land of Romance, in that her stock in trade is not fruitful matings or happy endings, but love misplaced, denied or betrayed." But romantic fiction is *always* about pain, about an unhappy yearning after a love that's not just elusive but, almost by definition, impossible. In what may be termed "comic" romance, suffering is miraculously rewarded, the straying and betraying male turns—quite implausibly—into the perfect husband. In "tragic" romance, the heroine is left with her anguish and anger unappeased; suffering is her means of protest, her art-form, in the end her identity.

This theme of perversely unhappy love, love wildly in excess of, and out of touch with, its object, crops up with remarkable frequency in women's writing from the 18th century through to the present. It's central in very different writers: in committed feminists (from Wollstonecraft through to Simone de Beauvoir) as well as in the determinedly feminine; in writers like Jean Rhys or Edna O'Brien, who focus on the minutiae of personal relationships, and in those like Doris Lessing, who open up the range and scale of the novel. If it goes underground in deference to the 19th-century demand for happy endings, it explodes in the 20th century. In the 1970s Rebecca West called a piece on contemporary women novelists, "And They All Lived Unhappily Ever After."

Lehmann's fascination with doomed love gains depth from her awareness of how the First World War shadowed the lives of a whole generation. As Tindall remarks, "it is as if the unseen war had killed not only the godlike men who could love and be loved unreservedly, but faith in the nature of permanence as well." But it's important to recognise that Lehmann is squarely in a long tradition of romantic women's writing. Her novels ask us to take that tradition seriously: to see that romantic fiction allows women to explore suppressed and unacknowledged aspects of themselves—and may even throw unexpected light on the changing relations between men and women.

LEHMANN'S HEROINES are all romantics—whether it's the naive adolescents in *Invitation to the Waltz*, the depressed housewife in *A Note in Music* squeezing transcendent meaning out of the briefest of brief encounters,

[1] *Rosamond Lehmann: An Appreciation*. By GILLIAN TINDALL. Chatto & Windus/The Hogarth Press, £10.95.

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or the older woman in *The Ballad and the Source*, fiercely and destructively trying to repossess her own passionate past through children and even grandchildren. Yet their experience is filtered through Lehmann's considerable craft—shifting viewpoints, dislocating contrasts between scenes, a vein of pure comedy—so that we feel with them and yet remain detached enough to understand.

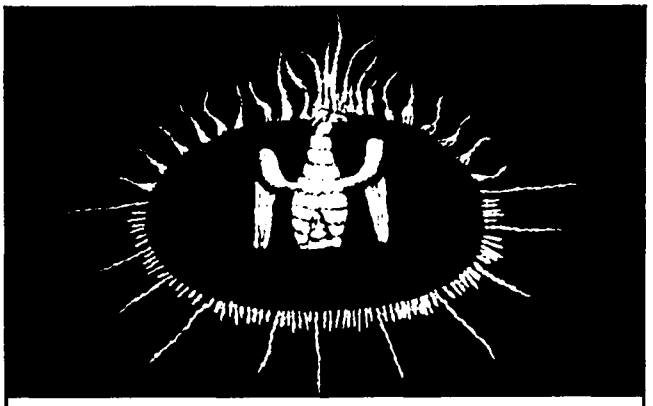
In *Dusty Answer*, Lehmann is admittedly over-involved with her lonely young heroine fascinated by the children next door. Yet even here, Lehmann shows very precisely how Judith constructs her dream-world, how she notices yet refuses to notice that those mysterious and wonderful children are themselves prey to uncertainty and jealousy. The novel centres on a typical Lehmann betrayal. Judith concentrates all her tumultuous energy, not on the boy who wants to marry her, or even the one who wants a serious affair; but on Roddy, who's attractive precisely because he's emotionally withdrawn, possibly homosexual. In a scene throbbing with high purple romance, they make love. Judith assumes, ecstatically, that this is forever, that this is everything. She writes him a letter—the sort of letter that will make her cringe for the rest of her life—offering, and demanding, the whole world.

Her expectations are brutally undercut by Roddy's alarmed indifference. She feels used and rejected; even worse at her age, she feels gauche and stupid for getting her signals so wrong. The novel hints that this pattern may well repeat itself in Judith's life. But there's a sharp intelligence flickering through her adolescent agonies and ecstasies. At the end, lonely and empty, she recognises that she has created the whole drama out of her own need and desires.

> "None of the children next door had been for her. Yet she, from the outside, had broken in among them and taken them one by one for herself. She had been stronger than their combined force, after all."

The Weather in the Streets—perhaps not Lehmann's greatest novel but her most characteristic—is again about its heroine's paradoxical strength. Olivia—whom we've already met on the brink of adult life in *Invitation to the Waltz*—is now separated after an unsatisfactory marriage, and in love with Rollo, the married son of the Big House, whom she'd adored as a child. The BBC-2 television version a couple of years ago was just another weepie about adulterous love and abortion, about masculine callousness and feminine masochism. The novel is far more complex, ironic and interesting. In a sense Olivia has *created* the Rollo she loves, out of her own unmet needs and deep, unarticulated discontents. She knows that he's weak and muddled, that if she weren't in love with him she might feel bored and irritated. The anger underlying her adoring love surfaces occasionally; she wonders if, after all, Rollo is *her* victim.

No one is better than Lehmann at describing the state of enchantment that is being in love—and at the same time conveying its precariousness and perversity. Like many of Lehmann's heroines, Olivia no longer quite fits into the safe upper-middle-class world of her childhood. Vaguely bohemian, she drifts through a grimy bedsitterdom, broke, working in a desultory way. She is both envious and cynical



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about her solidly-married sister. Sensitive to slights and anxious about her own respectability, she still feels subtly superior to all those settled wives and mothers. Loving Rollo is what she's been waiting for all her life. This will justify her sense of being special, impose meaning and focus: this will be "important enough to be forever."

Rollo's appeal is partly that he's an insider. He's married, safe, inaccessible. There's no real chance—and Olivia knows it—that they'd ever marry. And though she doesn't fully acknowledge it, marriage is really the last thing she wants: it would put an end to the all-engrossing intensities of romantic love and make her an insider again. Though she dreams fleetingly of bringing up a child in the country, she chooses abortion because she too shares respectable attitudes to illegitimacy, accepting that "it wouldn't do, darling." But the real blow comes when Olivia has to recognise that she is simply Rollo's mistress; that this is just another affair, something that can be discreetly accommodated if not quite approved. Olivia's suffering is terribly real, described with an unsettling naked directness. It is also perversely willed: an attempt—by forcing herself through extremes of pain—to keep alive the love she's created, keep it important, unique.

We never see Rollo except through Olivia's bedazzled eyes, but we *hear* him. Lehmann catches, with wicked accuracy, his good-natured determination to avoid trouble. He wants fun, a quiet life; he's uneasy when women cry, or make scenes, or are "highly strung." He's amiable, conventional, evasive—as if, Olivia remarks, "he wanted to dismiss himself, shrug off the responsibility of being himself." "It *was* fun, wasn't it, darling?" he asks at the end of the novel. And that is precisely how he has seen Olivia's tragic romance.

THE SAME COMEDY of mismatched expectations surfaces even in that dark and disturbing novel, *The Echoing Grove*. The hero Rickie broods, for example, about a brief and unsettling affair.

> "When she started to make it clear to him that she envisaged something tremendous, permanent, his basic emotion—underlying some affection, some gratitude, remorse, dismay—had been astonishment. How could she have imagined. . . . He couldn't help feeling frightfully annoyed, he was not afraid—merely not prepared to harbour so much more than he had space or welcome for. . . ."

Tindall rightly comments that this catches the "almost absent-minded love-as-a-thing-apart nature of the male sexual drive as opposed to the centralisation of the female one." But Lehmann, like her heroines, has a more complicated attitude to her heroes. They are idealised, and at the same time treated with an odd mix of sympathy and scorn. They too look back to the "wonderful young men", their brothers and cousins who died in the War, and can never throw off their sense of being accidental survivors who will never match the dead. They retreat whenever they can: into work, into homosexuality, into conventionality. They defend themselves by protesting, charmingly or brutally or with calculated pathos, their inadequacy. They are safe; but they're also impoverished, out of touch with themselves in a way that the women are not.

RICKIE IN *The Echoing Grove* is a new departure. For him, evasion hasn't worked. He's as vulnerable to romantic dreams as women are; he has, after all, fallen hopelessly in love with his wife's sister. He too protests his inadequacy: but it's forced out of him, bitterly and reproachfully. "I'm simply telling you for the tenth time I'm no good to you. Sometimes I think a new thing is happening: men aren't any good to women any more. But why can't you stop it happening?" Rickie suffers at least as much as his wife or his mistress, Dinah; he is locked in the nightmarish triangle of jealousy, angry disappointment and repeated betrayal that we gradually piece together. *The Echoing Grove* is a profoundly pessimistic book, about the destructive effects of romantic love—how over the years it wears down not just the lover and the beloved but those others who are inevitably neglected or betrayed when its claims are allowed.

Almost no one in *The Echoing Grove* escapes being "broken open" by an obsessive and unhappy love. After years of the bitterest jealousy, Rickie's wife Madeleine seems to break free of the triangle only to fall deeply and sexually in love with a younger man—who deserts her. The American woman Georgie, in plot terms minor, an outsider, spends one night talking to Rickie just before he dies; she is as desolatingly in love with him as his wife or mistress—may indeed even die for love of him. But it's Rickie this time who is the book's true masochist. Though Dinah nearly destroys herself with drink, almost dies in childbirth, and later attempts suicide, it's Rickie who, unable to reconcile the claims of romantic love and conventional marriage, resigns from life. He seems to court exhaustion and illness; it's he who lets go and dies tragically early.

Rosamond Lehmann's brother John wrote to her that "the slaughter of all the male characters and the final comparing of notes by the two remorseless women who have tried to devour them doesn't entirely satisfy me." This cynical view may have more truth than Tindall admits. Unquestionably, Rickie is a predator—and so are Dinah and Madeleine. And they're all victims, not least of their own devious desires. In *The Echoing Grove*, Rosamond Lehmann has pushed her exploration of the power and the final futility of romantic love as far as it can go. (When it appeared, she remarked that "some cycle of experience that opened when I was a girl was now coming to a close.") It's significant that, for the first time, a great deal of the novel is written from a man's viewpoint and deals with his longings and guilts. Romance is usually about an individual, whose overwhelming fantasy attempts to reshape the world according to his own private logic. This novel explores the powerful but conflicting fantasies that men and women alike bring to relationships. It's as if Rosamond Lehmann was about to cross a genuinely new frontier, to give romance a new and transforming dimension.

It was not a direction she was to pursue. With the death of

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her daughter Sally in 1958 all her remarkable creative energy went into another kind of pursuit—an attempt to forge a link between the living and the dead. Her memoir *The Swan in the Evening* describes this quest simply and movingly. But as her one recent novel (*A Sea-grape Tree*, 1976) suggests, this particular frontier remains inaccessible to fiction.

The Great or the Good?

Recent Fiction—By JAMES LASDUN

THERE'S A REMARK by Silone to the effect that the one book every writer carries within him, writing and rewriting it all his life, is nothing less than the image of his own soul. A fanciful way of putting things, but the truth it undoubtedly contains accounts more accurately than any amount of aesthetic criticism for the fact that Josef Skvorecky's "*magnum opus*" (Milan Kundera's tribute) is not a Great Novel; not quite.

It *ought* to be a great novel. Like most Czechs, Skvorecky's life, of which *The Engineer of Human Souls* [1] is a fictionalised rendering, has been lived close to the epicentres of the century's more significant upheavals: Nazi occupation 1939-45, when he was conscripted into a factory making Messerschmitts (where he went in for some honourable but ill-considered sabotage); the perilous Democratic Socialism of 1945-48; consolidation of the Stalinist Terror 1948-60; gradual liberalisation culminating in the Prague Spring; return of the Russian tanks in August 1968; exile to Canada, where he teaches American literature to culturally innocent students (an innocence which makes them, so he implies, the very stuff of which history's tragic repetitions are made), and where he shares the gossipy, spy-bedevilled, intellectually prickly existence of an émigré community.

A life suffused in the glamour of history, then. And Skvorecky's gifts as a writer are more than equal to the epic scale of his subject matter; of that there is no doubt. A conventional realist at heart, though somewhat in flight from his own conventionality, he organises his subject into a dozen or so straightforward, well-executed stories of love, war, campus life and so forth, splicing them together with a deliberate disregard for narrative sequence. The cutting method is crude but effective. Sometimes it operates as a simple suspense technique, abandoning the reader at a series of cliff-edges. More interestingly, it produces a structure which is peculiarly well-adapted to illuminating the Czech political experience of "recurrences with variations": unfettered by the demands of a linear plot, Skvorecky is free to jump back and forth in time, grouping disparate incidents for the sake of the patterns they reveal in human affairs. Thus, a typical ten pages cuts from a grotesque gallows-humour tale of Nazi brutality, to a present-day scene of paranoid Czech exiles dreaming up ludicrous plots to overthrow the Party, back to 1967 with an illiterate letter from a diligent worker who has swallowed unquestioningly the Party's anti-Semitic, anti-West distortions of history, and back again to present time where Smiricky (Skvorecky's name for his fictional self) is trying to persuade a hard-line Muslim Marxist student (whose attitudes have already reminded him of the existence of a Muslim *SS* division notorious for its ferocity during the War) that Mr Kurtz's vision of "The Horror" in *Heart of Darkness*, and his final formula for civilisation, "Exterminate all the brutes", are exact prophecies of Stalin's totalitarianism. . . .

It takes a formidable historical sense to sculpt with time in this way; and on a more detailed, technical level Skvorecky is also abundantly gifted. Witty, erudite, his lively, garrulous prose can accommodate everything from the most rarefied of philosophical arguments to the lower depths of scatological farce. He has a light touch with weighty ideas, that yields pithy turns of phrase—"Why bother to conceal the nakedness of power with a whore's G-string of ideology?"—and he has, too, a poet's transformative eye that can, for example, evince the tension of a family squabble in a candle-lit room with a single, perfect image—"The ordinary little flames on the expansive candles registering it all like the hands of a seismograph."

But for all that, there is something less than satisfactory—at times even unlikeable—about the book. The company of Skvorecky/Smiricky is not an unmitigated pleasure. Quite why is difficult to say; an accumulation of questionable attitudes smuggled through in the diplomatic bag of dissident status, rather than a single glaring vice. There's an implicit contempt for Western liberals evident in some rather savage caricatures, which is disagreeable, not because it is unjustified, but because it is presented in a way that somehow casts the dissenting reader into the role of brainwashed ideologue. Skvorecky is not prepared to countenance the relativity of his own point of view: despite his affable manner, he seems fundamentally short on tolerance and magnanimity; one would not relish having him in a position of power. Then, too, there is a hint of smugness in the way he adduces personal experience as a series of points scored against his naive students—"Higgins has not, as I have, carried a man in

[1] *The Engineer of Human Souls*. By JOSEF SKVORECKY. Translated by PAUL WILSON. Chatto & Windus, £9.95.

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German uniform on a stretcher through a parched May afternoon . . ."—and when this is coupled with his gleeful relish of the sexual opportunities his position as teacher affords him, it becomes somewhat objectionable. And finally there is something self-regarding in the sheer space he devotes to propping up the authority of his enterprise: large chunks of the book, in the form of drawn-out anecdotes illustrating indirectly (but unmistakably) the narrator's political wisdom, and long letters defending the literary methods he favours, serve little purpose other than to conscript the reader's acquiescence in the author's vision.

With Ignazio Silone's help, I have argued myself into the strangely pious position of criticising a writer for what amounts to a defect of soul. All I really mean to express by it is a vague disappointment with a book that has all the trappings of magnificence, but falls short, and for reasons that strictly *literary* criticism is ill-equipped to define.

VADIM MASLENNIKOV, the narrator of M. Ageyev's *Novel with Cocaine*,[2] suffers from Smiricky's problem in reverse: like Dickens's Pip, he presents the case for his own prosecution as an irredeemably rotten specimen of humanity (he publicly disowns his mother, knowingly infects a girl with VD, cheats his nanny out of her life savings, and all this *before* he has a cocaine habit to support . . .). But however hard he tries to convince us of his wickedness, he retains an aura of innocent charm that is deeply sympathetic: his quirky insights into his own personality make him too likeable for his story to command quite the power of evil that its author clearly wants. Nevertheless *Novel with Cocaine* remains an intriguing, often brilliant, creation.

The intrigue starts with its provenance. It was published in a Paris-based Russian émigré journal in the early 1930s. Encouraged by its success, Ageyev (a pseudonym) made plans to come to Paris, but didn't make it, and was never heard of again. The book was rediscovered recently, but the author's identity remains a mystery, as, presumably, does his or her sex.

Set in Moscow immediately before and after the Revolution, the book is ostensibly a study of what psychiatric jargon would call "the dependent personality." Portraiture rather than plot provides the impetus. Vadim presents himself in a series of unflattering tableaux: as a disaffected schoolboy full of shallow idealism and false swagger, as a callous womaniser but failed lover (afflicted with the classic symptoms of psychical impotence, as defined by Freud—"Where they love they do not desire, and where they desire they cannot love"—he is unable to have sex with the one woman he loves, until he has removed all trace of affection from their relationship), and finally as a cocaine addict hooked from the first attempt on his "nasal virginity", and thrust swiftly into a wretched existence of painful highs and unbearable lows.

[2] *Novel with Cocaine*. By M. AGEYEV. Translated by MICHAEL HENRY HEIM. Picador, £7.95.

At this level, the virtue of the book lies chiefly in the eerily heightened clarity of Ageyev's writing. Thoughts and observations, whether subtle or commonplace, are embodied in concrete analogies that in turn are transcribed with a kind of camera-realist precision. They range from the playful visual pun that would nowadays be called "Martian", whereby "a square of light on the wet, round cobblestones" becomes a "tray with apricots", to elaborate metaphors for the most complex of sensations. Here is the love-struck Vadim bumping into an old partner-in-lust and feeling compelled to justify his new constancy:

> "I felt what a thief must feel when, abandoning his trade thanks to a hard-working family that has given him a roof over his head, he meets an old comrade in crime and suffers pangs of conscience over having failed to rob his benefactors."

All writers, of course, use simile and metaphor in this fashion. But with Ageyev it is obsessive; a habit of mind that can only come to grips with experience by re-enacting it in more familiar terms—"Love . . . is like a child's hoop which, the moment it loses its momentum and starts to slow down, is in danger of toppling over."

Where this habit of mind comes most startlingly into its own is in the suggestion that the entire book may be read as political allegory. The Revolution is conspicuous by its virtual absence from the pages of *Novel with Cocaine*, yet it is impossible not to sense its presence hovering behind Vadim's narrative. A fellow schoolboy called Burkewitz is transformed, after a classroom humiliation, from a dull mediocrity to the class dynamo, burning with radical fervour—"within him seethed the terrible Russian power which knows no block nor barrier nor any impediment whatever: a power of steel, solitary and remote." One has only to think what the Russian word for "of steel' would sound like, to guess that the implicit referent Ageyev had in mind with this description is Stalin.

And then there is the extraordinary little essay on the nature of cocaine addiction, with which Vadim brings his story to its conclusion; an essay which, starting from the premise of the author's cocaine-induced vacillations between saintly goodness and diabolical malice, goes on to deduce that *all* artificial stimulants to the nobler side of the human spirit result in swings back into savagery—"Prophets! Dear, kind prophets! Leave us alone. Do not try to fan the flames of lofty sentiments in our souls; do not try to make us better than we are. For so long as we are bad, we limit ourselves to petty felonies; as we grow better, we kill." Again, the inference is clear; and it is this delicate and inspired linking of Vadim's cocaine with the phenomenon of revolutionary idealism that transforms the book from a portrait of its narrator to a portrait of its age.

A PLAIN, MIDDLE-AGED literary heroine with a rueful sense of the lowness of her stock on the sexual market, and an unwillingness to behave with the self-sacrificing decorum her social position demands; a story that

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takes her abroad into a world where new and surprising emotional adventures come her way; a treatment that plays ironically with the conventions of romantic fiction while hinting, through repeated allusion, that its real model is Henry James. . . . The very same formula that won Anita Brookner's *Hotel du Lac* its Booker Prize seems to have worked its magic again for Alison Lurie in *Foreign Affairs*.[3] The acclaim has been lavish and unaminous, beginning with the back-cover puffs; John Fowles awards it a position on the same shelf as Henry James and Edith Wharton, Mary Gordon notes its brilliant depiction of a new, post-Jamesian generation of Americans in England, and Gabriele Annan remarks on "the discreet brilliance with which the author chooses every word."

It is difficult to challenge such plaudits without overstating the case against them. I would certainly not wish to imply that *Foreign Affairs* is ever less than an entertaining, finely constructed novel.

Vinnie, the anglophile heroine, is in England to collect folklore and to see her literary friends. Somewhat to her mortification, she finds herself falling into a romantic liaison with a cartoon American tourist called Chuck Mumpson, whom she met on the plane over, and of whom she fears her snobbish English friends are unlikely to approve. Meanwhile, the "tall dark handsome" Fred Turner, an Eng. Lit. Fellow from the same college as Vinnie, falls in love with the beautiful but unbalanced aristocratic actress Rosemary Radley, another member of Vinnie's British social network.

Alison Lurie skilfully milks this brush between American academics and the English smart set for its yield of cross-cultural tentions and misunderstandings, generating from it a plot that is consistently absorbing, a series of vividly described British scenes (the Country House party, tea at Fortnum's, drinks in Mayfair . . .) and a collection of well-drawn, if familiar, English and American types.

A polished, engaging novel then. But despite its very visible aspirations to something grander than that (one of its characters repeatedly imagines himself to be inside a Henry James novel—a piece of authorial presumption that John Fowles *et al.* seem to have accepted with amazing lack of protest), it doesn't, I think, amount to a particularly significant work of art. Aside from the dubious worth of even *trying* to write like Henry James almost a century after the event, and the unlikeliness of producing anything other than pastiche, there is too much in the book that is either clumsy in a way that James could never be, or quite simply *wrong*.

Alison Lurie's last book was an examination of the meaning of dress, and she appears to pride herself on a depth and precision in her cultural detailing. She cares about getting people's clothes, accessories, mannerisms, speech habits, and so forth, exactly right. Even more, she cares about the way in which these things differ in England and America. When she *is* right, however, she tends either to be ploddingly so (for example, taking the reader doggedly through the various colours of the London telephone directories), or else to sound like a prim guide to British etiquette for socially ambitious American visitors—"Most of

[3] *Foreign Affairs*. By Alison Lurie. Michael Joseph, £8.95.

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the guests, as is usual at warm-weather London parties, are drinking white wine"; "the polite British are taught as children that it is rude to stare." She slips into tourist-brochure language in some of her descriptions of places—"the old-fashioned British elegance of Wheeler's", and into the rag-trade's debased vocabulary, for clothes—"the coat she's wearing now, with its romantic gathered hood. . . ." And then there are the mistakes: a cockney housekeeper, as impersonated by the aristocratic actress, using the Americanism "faggots"; a child's game called "cops and villains"; a snobbish littérateur referring to one of his titled friends as "Lord George" (intimacy with the Grand is implied precisely by *omitting* the title, rather than mentioning it). . . .

Minor solecisms perhaps, but in a book where the complexities of social minutiae are given a great deal more attention than those of individual characters (all of whom are stock-in-trade regulars, with countless appearances in novels of this nature), such carelessness is at best irritating, at worst a sign of fatally undependable powers of observation.

CARYL PHILLIP's excellent first novel *The Final Passage*[4] makes do with relatively few of the visible social signifiers that Alison Lurie relies on, concentrating instead on the more delicate business of mapping a culture at its psychological roots, within the individuals who comprise it. The culture is that of a Caribbean island in the 1950s, surrendering to the lure of emigration. The individuals are divided between those who stay behind, settling for the plain life with its simple pleasures of "sitting out in the sun, drinking beer, listening to music and talking", and those (the book's real subject) who make the mistake of sailing for England. The map that emerges is one of double dispossession, as Phillips's emigrant couple, Michael and Leila, discover they have forfeited home for the sake of an environment that is not simply indifferent to them, but actively hostile.

For all its spareness, the novel creates a strong impression of the two worlds it spans. Phillips has an admirably selective eye for incidental but telling details, using rain, for example, to contrast Caribbean lushness—"rain beating on leaves, on puddles, on grass, on rain itself"—with Anglo-Saxon meanness: "a sort of half-rain which left whole drops of water compressed against the window." On the human level, too, he brings his broody, doomed characters to life with a minimum of fuss—the disaffected Michael, whose failure even to identify, let alone fulfil, his hopelessly vague ambitions, manifests itself in vast but barely conscious acts of cruelty towards his wife Leila, who in turn accepts his womanising, drunkenness and humiliating neglect with a passiveness that confers on them a sort of dismal, god-given immutability. These two, and the assortment of friends and relatives who variously encourage, chastise, and console them in their sad marriage, are given presence with a deftness and economy that is rare in a first novel (the natural tendency of first novelists being to lay on character with a trowel). Again, it is a matter of isolating the details; summoning the essence of a relationship from a single gesture—"She stood on her tiptoes, put her hands on his shoulders, and kissed him lightly on the lips. It was not that he was that much taller than her, but she knew he liked it when she stretched to reach him. . . ."

There is a certain falling off in the second part, where Michael and Leila are confronted with the squalid misery that London offers its immigrant populations. Leila's passive endurance is taken to a point where it begins to look as though her creator has lost imaginative touch with her, and silenced her as a means of concealing the fact that he isn't sure what to have her say. And England too begins to pale; there are hints of a positively Zolaesque vision of London, but they seldom add up to anything more than tantalising glimpses. This is a pity, because Phillips clearly has the resources—the command of dialogue, the descriptive powers, above all the ability to depict strong emotions—to paint with a far richer palette than the one he has limited himself to in this novel. I hope in his next he will let himself go.

GARDEN, ASHES[5] purports to be the story of its author's childhood in Yugoslavia during World War II. The approach is poetic rather than novelistic; a series of lyrical evocations of moods, people and events, refracted through a child's mind, and flowing in and out of each other in a blurred, dreamlike fashion.

I use the word "purports", not because there is any reason to doubt the authenticity of the material, but because the sensibility with which Kiš endows Andi (the name he uses for his young self) is too studiedly that of a tremulous, hypersensitive young writer-to-be for it ever to ring quite true. A too-visible layer of *post factum* artifice lies over his archetypal childhood fears and desires—particularly his recurrent fear of his own, and his mother's, mortality.

Recollection of the genesis of this fear (the death of an uncle) begins with a more or less believable picture—"I stood petrified, thinking that one day I too would die. At the same time I was horror-stricken that my mother would also die"—upon which Kiš proceeds to impose an improbably precise piece of synaesthesia ("All of this came rushing upon me in a flash of a peculiar violet color") that at once plunges us into the realm of fanciful apostrophe, which realm the book seldom leaves. There are fanciful apostrophes on such things as sewing-machines (with a picture included, inexplicably), illuminated Bibles, dogs, dreams, breakfast trays . . . all of them the sorts of things such a child *would* totemise, few of them genuinely redolent of the kind of iconic *numen* that Kiš tries so hard—too hard—to coax from them.

What suffers most from this apostrophising tendency is the character of Eduard, Andi's father. Eduard appears to have been an extraordinary man: compulsive traveller, polymath, "pantheistic genius", drunk, obsessive compiler of an annotated, scholarly timetable for world-wide travel, concentration camp survivor . . . in short, a rich subject for his son to explore. But to my mind, Eduard never quite

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[4] *The Final Passage*. By CARYL PHILLIPS. Faber, £8.95, paper £3.95.

[5] *Garden, Ashes*. By DANILO KIŠ. Translated by WILLIAM J. HANNAHER. Faber, £8.95, paper £3.95.

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emerges into visibility through the clouds of determinedly oblique description with which Kiš surrounds him, and he remains a lost opportunity; one of many in a book that promises the visionary illuminations one associates with the great novels of childhood, but which seldom delivers anything more than glimpses.

Implications of Mortality

Recent Poetry—By JOHN MOLE

ANYONE who has suffered personal loss is left, at bottom, with the plain facts. For Douglas Dunn these are that in March 1981 his wife, Lesley, died from cancer of the eye—a particularly bitter irony given that she was an artist of great sensitivity to light and its conversation with lovingly chosen objects—and his new collection, *Elegies*,[1] which confronts their shared life and her death in a sequence of remarkable poems, is a heart-breaking book. It is also utterly without self-pity, a celebration of a rich and affirmative marriage. The entire volume is, of course, shadowed by a remorselessly familiar story which in this case begins in hospital with "the mind sliding against events/And the antiseptic whiff of destiny" and ends with intimations of a new life contingent upon the old:

> *She spoke of what I might do "afterwards".*
> *"Go, somewhere else." I went north to Dundee.*
> *Tomorrow I won't live here any more*
> *Nor leave alone.* My love, say you'll come with me.

However it is precisely because she does so vividly come with him into the making of these poems—their apprehension, witnessing and recollection—that the maudlin note is never struck. There's not a hint of Hardyesque guilt or Tennysonian gloom, not the slightest suspicion that death has provided the occasion for rhetoric. The poems seem an exact transcription of what was there in the relationship. In no sense at all are they compensatory. *Elegies* is the record of "moments of me/And moments of my love and me together. /And her moments, her secret visions in them", and it is a measure of Dunn's achievement and imaginative generosity that it is *her* moments, in life and death, which most vividly inform the collection. The book is a gift to Lesley, written with the wit and clear, unsentimental intelligence she so obviously approved of, and, as it were, offered to the reader over their shoulders by private invitation. What gradually emerges, throughout the sequence, is the portrait of a woman who "refused all grief, but was alight/With nature, courage, friendship, appetite." When Dunn does employ conscious literary artifice, even pastiche, it seems part of a serious game the couple might have played together, a mode of heightening the pleasures of living in the knowledge that "art is love":

> *My lady loved to cook and dine, but never more*
> *Across starched linen and the saucy pork*
> *Can we look forward to* Confit de Périgord.
> *How well my lady used her knife and fork!*
> *Happy together—ah, my lady loved to sport*
> *And love. She loved the good; she loved to laugh*
> *And loved so many things, infallible in art*
> *That pleased her, water, oil or lithograph,*
> *With her own talent to compose the world in light.*

In "Anniversaries" there is a direct allusion which combines John Donne's "The Anniversarie" and "The Relique": "That day will still exist/Long after I have joined you where/Rings radiate the dusty air/And bangles bind each powdered wrist" but such referential hyperbole is set up only to be brought down to common earth, and Lesley's own words—"Write out of me, not out of what you read"—echo throughout *Elegies*:

> *I shiver in the memory*
> *And sculpt my foolish poetry*
> *From thwarted life and snapped increase.*
> *Cancer's no metaphor.*
> *Bright rain-glass on the window's birch*
> *This supernatural day of March,*
> *Dwindled, come dusk, to one bright star,*
> *Cold and compassionate.*

Cold, there, does not mean *unfeeling*. Quite the reverse. It is implicated with the compassion, and it has to do with the unflinching directness of Dunn's attention to detail—all those "objects implicated in my love." The recurring images of light, in poem after poem, are never soft at the edge. They are the essence of concentration: "Writing with light, the heart within my eye /Shines on my grief, my true contemporary." And in the poem which has haunted me most, "Sandra's Mobile", light and movement combine in a single object given and received with love. The moment of death is neither dark nor desolate. To borrow a line from another poem, "the air was the fingertips of loneliness" but here it is the poet's own breath, and in touching the three seagulls it is quite simply the kiss of that continuing life which the entire book celebrates:

[1] *Elegies*. By DOUGLAS DUNN. Faber and Faber, £7.50, paper £4.00.

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A constant artist, dedicated to
Curves, shapes, the pleasant shades, the feel of colour,
She did not care what shapes, what red, what blue,
Scorning the dull to ridicule the duller
With a disinterested, loyal eye.
So Sandra brought her this and taped it up—
Three seagulls from a white and indoor sky—
A gift of old artistic comradeship.
"Blow on them, Love." Those silent birds winged round
On thermals of my breath. On her last night,
Trying to stay awake, I saw love crowned
In tears and wooden birds and candlelight.
She did not wake again. To prove our love
Each gull, each gull, each gull, turned into dove.

For Gavin Ewart, mortality is the encroaching scent of a spiked bouquet. His new collection is a generous, bumper fun-book, full of skilled variations, but the fireworks of his clever versification dazzle against a darkening sky. "With each new book the old poet thinks:/Will this be the last?/ . . . Cram the poems in like a herring glut—/two, three to the page!" *Carpe diem* is the persistent theme, and although, apparently, "no sensible person would ever want to be young again", *The Young Pobble's Guide to His Toes* [2] is all for ensuring that one's pedal extremities are not bitten off before time, or that they don't go stiff prematurely for lack of dancing the night away:

The moral shines bright as a mermaid's hair.
Count them and keep them while they're still there!

Or to put it another way, there's no pobble like an old pobble. Ewart seems to regard old age as a condition which counts its blessings (all ten of them) even while contemplating "liver-spotted hands", and he relishes every opportunity for making the same mistakes as ever. He's a celebrant of human fallibility, and a discreet folly is what he's after. Why should old men not be bad and still a little dangerous to know?

In the typically entitled "The Heel Has Come Full Circle" what appears at first to be a merely silly piece of occasionalia about Malcolm Muggeridge's religious conversion gathers conviction as it closes in on "that great actor,/like a sage with a tome, /full of faith, froth and foam." Not for Ewart the sage's cope, and his tomes are happily whatever comes to hand. Milton or a Menu. Poem after poem carries epigraphs from his miscellaneous reading, and footnotes direct the reader to catholic sources with the smallest possible *c*. Appended to a parody of McGonagall, for example, is the information that "*The first two lines of this poem are genuine food advertising of March 1984 in a London take-away/eat-in restaurant.*" Like a latter-day Pepys (Pepys being one of his heroes who inspires several of the poems in the book), Ewart is a Londoner who gets around:

London is good and bad, a teasing monkey
(remembered from a kids' book with a moral),
and not for worship in such all-out postures.

Those all-out postures refer to the love particular poets have had for the places with which they have become identified, such as "Norman Nicholson alone in Millom", but Ewart is a Town Owl and there's a drop of the metropolis in most of his work. His seemingly effortless quadruple and quintuple rhymes are more Cole Porter than W. S. Gilbert, and belong in a night-club. Even his more bookish parodies are a species of literary floor-show. Yet at the same time, and again like Pepys who in another of the footnotes "*saw the limbs of some of our new Traytors set upon Aldersgate, which was a sad sight to see; and a bloody week this and the last have been*", Ewart peddles the broadsheets of a national conscience. Naughty Samuel was also Mr Pepys, and Mr Ewart is often there behind the carnival mask of Bad Gavin:

At Death we're shouting "Gotcha!",
we're perfect shining knights—
no diplomatic botcher
has any bleeding rights . . .

How grand for circulation
and for the Tories too,
a floor show for the Nation,
and free for me and you! . . .

We know there's news in "traitors" . . .
and as the hot war nears
like stripshow fornicators
we roar it on with cheers . . .
we hope it lasts for years!

In *The Young Pobble's Guide to His Toes* there's something for everyone except for Prunes and Prisms, and there's a handful of really fine poems as well.

If, for Gavin Ewart, the flesh is pleasurably weak, for Peter Redgrove the spirit is more than willing. "One who is everywhere at once must be joyous" he writes at the end of "The Happy Ground", a poem which appears in *The Working of Water*,[3] a small volume from the Taxus Press, but does not reappear in his full collection *The Man Named East and Other New Poems*.[4] "The Man Named East" itself, though, begins with a bit of reconstitution: "The dew, the healing dew, that appears/Like the dream, without warning, hovering on the blades" has its origins in "The Happy Ground" where "the dew, healing dew/Appears suddenly in its completed form/On all the grass-stems in the million meadows." This observation of what seems to be Redgrove's working method is merely offered to point up how his poetry traces itself back to the source. There is a ground beyond the Happy Ground but it is immaterial whether it comes before or after. Redgrove's is the rhetoric of Unity, and his poems are a concentration of autochthonous forces. Which poem a

[2] *The Young Pobble's Guide to His Toes*. By Gavin Ewart. Hutchinson, £5.95.

[3] *The Working of Water*. By Peter Redgrove. Taxus Press (30 Logan Street, Langley Park, Durham DH7 9YN), £2.95.

[4] *The Man Named East and Other New Poems*. By Peter Redgrove. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4.95.

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phrase or images comes from is incidental. One stanza is so many lines of palpable spirit dissolving into the next, and the text is the numinous meaning of sensation. "I stand by the small stream which contributes", he says, and there's a serious pun in that second verb. For Redgrove everything is contributory and con-tributary, an expanding universe, a holy flux of luminous and cleansing simplifications where even the smallest trickle flows into some kind of cosmic lake of revelation, so that "I bend /My ear to the water and now I find /Underspeech . . . ." What he hears is not some pantheistic still sad music but the laughter of a comedy bent on reconciliation. His imagination dodges all such labels as *surrealist, fantasist, absurdist*, and it's some kind of tribute to his hypnotic powers that lines such as

> *All men on earth are brothers, under heaven*
>
> *Where Lear-shaped fathers scatter their botany, their seed*
> *Out of the sky, the great conjuring pisstrick*

seem, at the time and in context, neither banal nor trivial. With linguistic sleight of hand, they unite the Royal Baths and the Tap Room in a gush of affirmation. Only when considered in isolation do they give themselves over to parody or to the embarrassing pretentiousness of some of Redgrove's imitators who lack his sense of humour. In poetry, a guru without, at the very least, the suspicion of a grin is hard to take.

Redgrove has become a master of the hyperbolic simile—"Sliding down the girl's face/A long convoy of tears/Shining like lorries through the night"—and one long poem of his contains enough metaphorical fodder to keep a mini-Martian provided for a whole slim volume, but for him accuracy of sensation is a means of penetrating beyond appearances; it is seldome an end in itself. His cultivation of the senses' innocence is no mere part of an aesthetic strategy. He would regard it as a way of "becoming." Even a visit to the barber is a laying-on of hands, as in one of the book's most conventionally autobiographical pieces, "The Proper Halo":

> *The oil shivers in the barber's palm,*
> *He puts the plump bottle down, and that hand*
> *Descends swooping on the other; they rub together*
> *Like mating birds and as they fly to my head*
> *I see they shine. His rough fingertips*
> *Massage my scalp like the beating of a flock*
> *Of doves; now it is my hair that shines*
> *And stands up as though an ecclesiastical charge*
> *Were passing through me; I laugh! . . .*

I laugh too. Somehow there seems to be no choice, and certainly the charge in Redgrove's work is considerable. At the very least it tickles, and often it includes the shock of recognition.

THOUGH HIS MORE CIRCUMSPECT method is very different from Redgrove's prodigal abundance, Charles Causley's poetry can also be seen as a search for unity of being. His latest collection carries an epigraph from Martin Buber: "All journeys have secret destinations of which the

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traveller is unaware", and as I read through *Secret Destinations*,[5] I found myself responding with a quotation of my own from a poem by R. S. Thomas: "It is too late to start/ For destinations not of the heart."

Much of Causley's recent work is, at first glance, travelogue of a high order. It gives vivid accounts of dramatic scenery in Portugal, Greece, Canada and Australia while at the same time celebrating new acquaintance and established friendships. It's detailed, populated, and full of an intense gratitude for companionship. Implicit in every arrival, though, is a departure which intimates a deep concern for those left behind:

Today
I see the naked-footed children trawl
The dam for yabbies, and I watch you clinging
Together, minute-long, before I'm driven
Back to the airport. And it is as though
You fear—one, both of you—another kind
Of fire within this Eden, or blood broken
Under the hard sun. The incurious blue, still burning
Over the homestead roof. The sprinkler turning.

A sense of the fragility of personal relations—and their precious importance—is set against a backdrop of wounded landscapes. Home being where one starts from, Causley looks out from Launceston Castle on a "quarry's old wound" and notices how "poppy, valerian/Bleed by the lean lake-side", but it's the same at Trephina Gorge in Australia where "the gorge opened its wound of rock" or at Gudow where "a parapet bleeds red sand." In this context, where his surroundings seem an image of his disquiet, the traveller becomes the human spirit in search of healing, the wounded surgeon operating on the body topographic:

And underneath our jaunting tongues is this:
How both of us came, hand in cooling hand,
To the stone centre of the wilderness.
Drank from a single cup. Shared fortune; bed.
Pretended not to notice how love bled
Into the eager sand. Lay, heart on heart:
Yet never slept so cold, so far apart.

"Jaunting tongues" in that first line is a beautifully judged phrase. It acknowledges the naive enthusiasm of a tripper merely passing through and chattering about the itinerary, but it is followed immediately by intimations of the sacramental, so that *tongues* take on an altogether more powerful resonance. What follows is no dissolution into vague spirituality, though. There's pain at the still centre, and "Gudow" ends, as do so many of the poems in *Secret Destinations*, on a note of intense personal loneliness.

Causley is a companionable poet but he is, in some ways, a desolate one. He knows where all the ladders start, and in "Returning South" it's in the rag-and-bone shop of his own pocket:

Unjacketed,
I chuck cash, keys on the still-falling shelf.
Unpack shirts, socks. Dear Christ, what's this? Myself.

ALL THE THEMES which have distinguished his earlier work are still evident, most notably that of hurt innocence (there's a fine new translation of Rimbaud's "Sleeper in a Valley"—he was bound to get round to that in the end), and he has not altogether abandoned the ballad form for which he is best known. However, what makes *Secret Destinations* so impressive is its direct, personal candour, and a kind of stubborn craftsmanship which has only recently become a sustained element in his verse. A number of the poems are written in stanzas both weighty and spacious. The book begins with a series of family portraits, and is informed throughout by the example of Richard Bartlett, Causley's "shadowed grandfather/. . . stone cutter, quarreyman" who died when a slate fell on him and split his skull. At the moment of his death, Bartlett was about to split a stone, "trying to find/A place to insert the wedge." The analogy is obvious, but Causley refrains from making it immediately. He pays Bartlett the tribute of a full and moving biography before closing the ninety-year-old local paper in which he has been reading about him and observes himself as a poet attempting to match those virtues of painstaking craftsmanship by which his ancestor lived:

I close the paper,
Its print of mild milk-chocolate. Bend to the poem,
Trying to find a place to insert the wedge.

[5] *Secret Destinations*. By CHARLES CAUSLEY. Macmillan, £7.95.

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THE WEDGE INSERTED by David Scott in his excellent first collection, *A Quiet Gathering*,[6] is the Latin word *quodlibet* and all that it implies of emotional and verbal scruple:

> *It would be a good title.*
> *It pleased Duns Scotus*
> *and we share initials.*
> *All those airy questions packed*
> *into the neat hutch of a Latin word;*
> *quodlibet: exactly separating this from that.*
> *It got to such a pitch with him,*
> *and I know how he felt,*
> *that his stomach would not settle*
> *for less than the essence of a thing.*
> *The pleasure of getting it right*
> *meant he could draw the blankets*
> *round his chin, and sleep tight.*
> *The converse I find is true,*
> *tossing this way and that,*
> *sorting out which, if any,*
> *of the possible conditional clauses, will do.*

Despite the claim, or apologia, made in those last four lines, Scott is closer to his delightful characterisation of Duns Scotus than he would seem to allow. The conditional clauses *are* sorted out, and the pleasure of his verse has much to do with how right he gets the essence of a thing or of an experience.

There's nothing complacently snug about these immaculate poems but they fit their subjects perfectly. They are full of gentle, contemplative intelligence and a tenacious modesty. Scott is an Anglican priest in a small Cumbrian parish, and one of his most striking gifts is for hinting at a significance in the smallest detail. He has a patient, parochial eye which gazes long enough at the incidental to discover its central importance. For example, in "David Livingstone on the eve of discovering the Victoria Falls" he catches the magnitude of the event and the simple acknowledgement of basic human needs in a single sentence:

> *On these nights of clear skies*
> *he is grateful for his warm shirt,*
> *its Scotch wool; at the end of the night,*
> *this noise.*

Though working within a small compass (and most of the poems are very short), this is imagination of a high order. In a moving tribute to a dead friend, Scott writes "you sat still; and had a private voice /which only carried as far as it needed." At a glance, this might be seen to suggest a limited scope of influence but, of course, it does no such thing. It means that, as is the case with Scott's own poems, the response was acutely sensitive to a core of privacy at the centre of every occasion.

Many of the poems are hushed interiors. In "The Seaman's Reading Room, Southwold", Scott takes pleasure in

[6] *A Quiet Gathering*. By DAVID SCOTT. Bloodaxe Books, £4.95.

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observing "outdoor furniture/inside" and in "On Visiting Keats' House", "our Duffle coats, when we leaned /on the glass to read this letter to Fanny /gave a slight tap of toggle. We read, /with eyes only, a postscript full of dashes /and torment." Again, as with the portrait of Livingstone, the slight and the momentous are heard and seen together. The toggle and the torment. It's this quiet attentiveness that entices rather than demands the reader's own attention. Nothing, however small, is overlooked just in case it can offer illumination. Perhaps there are occasions when, like Baron Von Hugel in another of the poems, David Scott seeks to reassure himself "that directing a soul /is not only a matter of angel's talk, it is /also the knack of catching the evening post", but he shouldn't worry. Catching the evening post is what his scrupulous, affectionate poetry does best.

U. A. Fanthorpe's third collection is much the same mixture of wit, compassion—and a dash of disdain—as before. *Voices Off*[2] speaks for the supporting actors in life's cast list. Some of its most entertaining poems, as in the previous books, are dramatic monologues given to walk-on parts. Or, in the case of "The Person's Tale", a walk-in part where Coleridge's celebrated scapegoat becomes hot under his stiff collar when he considers not only his posthumous reputation but the damage done to "the proud name of Porlock" as well:

Prepared for any
Extreme office, I presented myself
Before Mr. C-. Sir, said I, I am here.
The very man, *quoth he, clasping me in*
A distasteful embrace. Most reverend sir—
Then for two hours detained me at his door
With chronicles of colic, stomach, bowels,
Of nightly sweats, the nightmare, cramps, diarrhoea. . . .

This is one of the most sustained voices. Others include an ambitious local poet ("Betjeman now— /he rhymes too far apart. I'd have 'em close/Like church bells. I'm ready for publication"), some hilariously recognisable entries in a church visitors book ("Super! Fantastic! Jesus Lives! Ace!") and a group of students having difficulty with Yeats ("Married a median / Who believed in automatic writing"). U. A. Fanthorpe is good at this kind of thing. She's a clever mimic, and one can forgive her an occasional lapse into snide, slightly patronising exasperation. Sometimes her targets are a bit too easy, though, and there's an embarrassingly breezy piece of fun-poking at the expense of Royal Family addicts: "With a Grundy here and a Gloucester there/Here a chukka, there a chicken, here and there a corgi" etc. She shouldn't be wasting her time with this kind of thing. There are others who can do it much better—if indeed it's worth doing at all.

Much more impressive are those poems on which, surely, her growing reputation rests. These are evocations of particular places, rooted in history, which have become palimpsests and where the "voices off" are the echoes of past generations heard in the fragments that remain. Or portraits of that submerged population group which her work as a hospital clerk have occasioned—the best of these, in this collection, being "Visiting Mr Lewis in January" and the excellent "Patients" in which the "true patients" are not "the officials ones, who have been/Diagnosed and made tidy" but "us/The undiagnosed":

What drugs
Will help our Matron, whose cats are
Her old black husband and her young black son?

Who will prescribe for our nurses, fatally
Addicted to idleness and tea? What therapy
Will relieve our Psychiatrist of his lust

For young slim girls, who prudently
Pretend to his excitement, though age
Has freckled his hands and his breath smells old?

When U. A. Fanthorpe speaks in her own voice for the undiagnosed—those who, like Dickens's Mrs Gradgrind, might well say "I think there's a pain somewhere in the room but I couldn't positively say that I have got it"—she is at her sympathetic best, and quite free of that knowing, ever-so-slightly superior ring-mastery with which she gets her little menagerie of performing voices to jump through the hoops of their own innocent pretensions.

[2] *Voices Off.* By U. A. Fanthorpe. Harry Chambers /Peterloo Poets, £4.50.

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"THERE IS A stillness around objects", writes Jean Earle in a poem from her second collection, *The Intent Look*,[8] and that stillness serves both to isolate those objects as they appear in her work and to insist on their being part of a pattern as coherent as it is mysterious. In this she often reminds me of Edwin Muir with his gift of mythologising the domestic. At times her scenes are finely attuned to the sinister and threateningly ambiguous ("Up the garden, a dog steals raspberries /With smiling teeth") while at others they are offered "like bundles children carry or clutch in sleep/Full of sustaining treasures." Always, though, they reveal an acute, pained sense of the long perspectives, an awareness of how briefly we occupy our little space. In "A Neighbour's House" the previous inhabitant, "a tall old woman/Of a stripped serenity", still seems its owner in the poet's imagination even though a newcomer is already knocking down walls and making it over:

> *Young man, I wish you every good,*
>
> *It is not your property*
> *I take over to inhabit secretly—*
> *But the outworn life,*
> *Willed to me by deeds not of this world.*
> *To do with hands round cups*
> *Brimmed with our common fears.*
> *To do with looking at what life is*
> *Together.*
>
> *Catching one long breath.*

Jean Earle is in her seventies, and "our common fears" are her private ones ("Forgive me. My nature asks/This lonely question"). These fears, and mortal questions, ambush her with a desolating immediacy which is somehow all the more sharply felt for its being experienced in a commonplace setting or action:

> *Oh, my sweet dead—the cakes, the cakes!*
> *All news discharged to the faint, receptive sheen*
> *Of your listening eyes. Then, for the first time,*
> *I knew that you were dead at last, and I—*
>
> *Healed?*
>
> *It came upon me with the emptied teapot*
> *And the westering sun. I had no plans for you*
> *Beyond the afternoon.*

THE PLEASURES AND LIMITATIONS of a nicely observed domestic poetry are everywhere apparent in Duncan Forbes's first collection. Despite some ambitious moments, *August Autumn*[9] keeps stepping aside to acknowledge that there's a world elsewhere while at the same time seeming to shrug off more awareness of it than is decent:

> *The sky is endless and there is no sky.*
> *All resurrections are deciduous*

[8] *The Intent Look*. By JEAN EARLE. Gomer Press (Llandyswl, Dyfed SA44 4BQ, Wales), £1.75.

[9] *August Autumn*. By DUNCAN FORBES. Secker & Warburg, £5.95.

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Or so the birdsong and the leaves imply.
Well, in again to cake with chocolate eggs,
Then "Murder On the Orient Express."

I'm uneasy about that "Well." It's just too all-embracingly *sensible* like the Wellingtons and windcheaters which Peter and Jane wear in "Sheltered Upbringing" while they help daddy garden:

He clips the privet and they feed the bonfire.
Soon they will plant potatoes in its embers
And eat them, hard and gritty, after tea.
At dusk they listen to their bedtime story:
"Henry The Green Engine" who was immured
For disobedience like Antigone.

Of course Forbes intends a gentle mockery, and he is in fact very good at taking a detached, affectionate look at the continuity between his own middle-class childhood and his present family life marked out by Jackdaw Folders and the Reverend Awdry. He's even better in a handful of poems about the death of his father-in-law where the ironies are in the situation itself rather than in his manner of perceiving it. Here his plain, unequivocal candour is very moving:

And where your father read our banns
Is an empty step where his coffin stands.

The same black fleet of cars on hire
Brought him and the bridal party here

And he found it difficult not to cry
As I do, biting back tears, today

At this sad marriage of love to grief,
This funeral of a married life.

This points to the poet Duncan Forbes may become if he manages to stop hiding in the shelter of witty circumspection.

Little Eleanor With Fruit

Blackberry, nettle and creaking grass
Choke the path beside the wall.
Blackberry, nettle and creaking grass
Fondle suntanned legs that pass,
Suntanned legs and sandalled feet.
Should we call it death at all,
Death so languid, slow and sweet?
Yet their case is terminal.

Hawthorn flowers heard the thwack,
Wood on leather, day by day.
Hawthorn flowers heard the thwack,
Heard the boys of two months back:
"Two it." "Run up." "Can you?" "Mine!"
Now at half-past close of play
Dark the hawthorn berries shine,
The cricketers are gone away.

Mushrooms in the hedge appear
Moony, white and enervate.
Mushrooms in the hedge appear,
Summer seals another year
With a final butterfly.
On the orchard gate,
Eleanor and I,
Rising one and thirty-eight.

She claps her little hands for love
And joy at all a life can hold.
She claps her little hands for love,
For ripe fruit reddening above,
For bitter green a wind took down
That rot before they're old.
This is our summer's end, the brown
Autumnal streaked with gold.

John Whitworth

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Books Encountered

Theories of Criticism: Essays in Literature and Art. By M. H. Abrams and James Ackerman. Library of Congress, single copies gratis on request.

Twin mini-surveys of recent trends, Professor Abrams doing his best to be fair to Derrida and such "boa-deconstructors" (Geoffrey Hartman's term) as Paul de Man and J. Hillis Miller, but tentatively reverting to such permanent, old-hat concerns as meaning and intelligibility.

The Crisis in Criticism: Theory, Literature, and Reform in English Studies. By William E. Cain. Johns Hopkins University Press, $24.50, £23.50.

A more thorough canter over much the same ground, supplemented by the author's reviews of earlier and some lesser critics, arguing that academic lit. crit. has become "commodified", and that revolution—in English studies as elsewhere—is less radical than reform.

Themes out of School: Effects and Causes. By Stanley Cavell. North Point Press, $20, distributed by Scolar Press, £16.95.

Twelve disparate essays by the Walter M. Cabot Professor of Aesthetics and the General Theory of Value at Harvard, who should have insisted on an index to his interweaving of literature, criticism and the once popular arts of film and TV.

Eros and Psyche: The representation of personality in Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, George Eliot. By Karen Chase. Methuen, £12.95, paper £5.95.

A refreshingly traditional examination of "character", quoting but also mildly disagreeing with Hillis Miller, reading widely as well as closely, and asking such mock-Bradley questions as "Where is Jane Eyre?"

The Thematics of Commitment: The Tower and the Plain. By P. M. Cryle. Princeton University Press, $40.00, £43.10.

A dense and learned investigation of "commitment" in the existentialist sense, as present or absent in Stendhal, Zola, Barrès, Drieu la Rochelle, Sartre, Camus, and Ionesco—unduly respectful to Drieu's and Sartre's fiction and Camus's philosophising.

Literary Fortifications: Rousseau, Laclos, Sade. By Joan DeJean. Princeton University Press, $36.50, £39.30.

For once, the title means what it says: Professor DeJean treats military strategy as a key metaphor in *Julie*, *Emile*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, and *Les 120 Journées de Sodome*. How about the besieged *Pamela* or *Jane Eyre?*

The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Edited by Margaret Drabble. Oxford University Press, £15.

A huge bargain, replacing Harvey's 1932 volume, itself several times revised. Encounter is in, as are four successive co-editors. Margaret Drabble includes her sister A. S. Byatt, but too modestly omits herself.

Emerson's Romantic Style. By Julie Ellison. Princeton University Press, $25.00, £25.

More close reading, this time showing how much more contradiction and passion there was in Emerson's essays than casual, half-remembered reading might suggest. But he would have disliked Professor Ellison's jargon.

Plausible Prejudices: Essays on American Writing. By Joseph Epstein. Norton, $17.95.

No jargon here, but faintly dandyish elegance and plenty of good jokes, notably in "Why Madame Bovary Couldn't Make Love in the Concrete", inspired by a tin-eared freshman's term paper, plus sharp reviews and sane, wayward judgments.

Seven Pillars of Popular Culture. By Marshall W. Fishwick. Greenwood Press, £33.95.

Not some P. G. Wodehouse figment, but a real professor from Virginia, on enduring myths and archetypes, arguing that pop culture "is not the enemy, but the necessary adjunct of élite culture." Ho hum: what about the time it takes up?

The Name of Action: Critical Essays. By John Fraser. Cambridge University Press, £25, paper £8.95.

Amenable, wide-ranging, unindexed essays on orthodox subjects like *The Tempest* and *Huck Finn*, but also B. Traven, *The Story of O*, and village life, acknowledging debts to Leavis and mild indifference to post-structuralist theory.

To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Pound's Cantos. By Christine Froula. Yale University Press, $18.50, £18.50.

Virtually cryptographical analysis of the *Cantos* and their unpublished manuscripts, elucidating typos and other errors, which it relates (rather *tirant par les cheveux*) to the greater shrdlus of Pound's career.

The Skeptic Disposition in Contemporary Criticism. By Eugene Goodheart. Princeton University Press, $22.50, £24.30.

Deconstruction deconstructed—or relegated to a supporting role as one type of criticism only—on the grounds that it attacks theology and epistemology, and hence both ethics and liberty.

Criticism and Critical Theory. Edited by Jeremy Hawthorn. Edward Arnold, £6.95.

Essays by various youngish dons, mostly tackling the problem of differential readings, but also homing in on other media, including the film adaptation of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and looking at Virginia Woolf's feminist influence.

Taking Chances: Derrida, Psychoanalysis, and Literature. Edited by Joseph H. Smith and William Kerrigan. Johns Hopkins University Press, $20, £19.20.

Derrida's Digest? Not quite: seven differential essays, including one by himself and one by Hillis Miller, relating criticism to psychoanalysis. "Here, then", say the editors, "is your postmodernism." Well, yes.

Poetry Today: A Critical Guide to British Poetry 1960-1984. By Anthony Thwaite. Longman, £3.50.

A perceptive scamper through recent and contemporary work, filled with quotations and sensible judgments, updating and expanding the author's 1973 survey, also for the British Council. The big omission is his own poetry.

Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice. By Elizabeth Wright. Methuen, £8.95, paper £3.95.

An orderly, well-argued counterpart to Smith and Kerrigan's Derrida symposium, covering art as well as literature, and especially stressing Lacan. The author is Lecturer and Fellow in German at Girton College, Cambridge.

R.M.

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New P.G. Wodehouse Material

Letters & Notebooks of his Apprentice Years—By RICHARD USBORNE

P. G. WODEHOUSE'S *The Man Upstairs*, a collection of his earliest post-public-school short stories, was published by Methuen in January 1914. The last story in the book, "In Alcala", first appeared in *The London Magazine* in December 1911. Neither that story, nor the book, was ever published in America, though most of the remaining 18 stories had appeared in American magazines, and many of them in *The Strand* magazine in England. Most of the stories had been written when Wodehouse was living in New York on the cheap and teaching himself to write, when necessary, in American idioms.

"In Alcala" is a remarkable literary relic. It is sentimental or, as we might say today, soppy. Never, as a later rule, did Wodehouse use sentimentality except to mock it (e.g. Madeline Bassett; e.g. "Honeysuckle Cottage"). "In Alcala" is basically autobiographical. Its hero, Rutherford Maxwell, a young Englishman on the staff of the New Asiatic Bank in New York, is trying in the evenings to write himself out of servitude and poverty. "When I'm in the 20-cents-a-word class, I'll write only once a month—the rest travelling", he boasts to Peggy Norton. She is the heroine of "In Alcala", a charming American chorus-girl, who speaks a racy and attractive New York patois which, accurate or not, was certainly daring for a young English author trying to sell to American editors. And the story is unique in the Wodehouse canon in that the heroine has been, and apparently still is, the mistress of a man she doesn't love, a star actor. She rejects Rutherford Maxwell's ardent proposal of marriage. He has just written, with her occasional help, a play which, with the said star actor in it, has had a wonderful first night reception on Broadway. And on his way home in a taxi-cab (a "*car*" would have meant a street-car) from the subsequent supper party, he had "showered kisses on Peggy's upturned face" (a cliché that Wodehouse plays for laughs in many later books). No, although Peggy, wearing a picture hat, sitting on his writing-table and ruffling or smoothing his hair, has loved him and made him love her, she sends him back to the girl whose photograph is on his mantlepiece: the girl he had left behind him in Worcestershire, Alice Halliday. (An Eve Halliday, no relation, is the heroine of *Leave It To Psmith*, 1923.) Sob, sob.

Rutherford Maxwell has the cheapest possible accommodation in Alcala, a ground-floor "hall-bedroom." Elsewhere, up a few floors, Peggy shares a room, cheap, but not so cheap as Rutherford Maxwell's, with another girl from the theatre. For "Alcala" read the Hotel Earle in Greenwich Village, where Wodehouse stayed whenever he was in New York between 1909 and 1913. "Rutherford Maxwell" is fiction for Pelham Grenville Wodehouse. The latter looked good in print on the covers of magazines and under the titles of his stories on the inside pages. But it was slimmed to P. G. Wodehouse when the editorial fashion changed, and it remained at that. It was Plum to his friends, Plummie to his family. In "In Alcala" Peggy very soon says that Rutherford Maxwell won't do in America. "Gee! That's going some, isn't it? Wants amputation, a name like that. . . ." So she calls him George.

There is no record of young (well, 27 in 1908) bachelor Wodehouse having an amorous encounter with an American chorus-girl. Between the Wars, and a happily married man, yes, perhaps. Wodehouse's great friend and collaborator in the theatre, Guy Bolton, was a fount of stories, probable and improbable, which he told excellently in conversation, less excellently in print. Bolton had a story, which he called "Plum's Wild Oat", and published in a New York magazine. In the 1920s, the days of their pecunious glory as a musical-comedy team—book, dialogue and lyrics—he and Wodehouse were travelling round America with a Number 2 company of one of their Broadway shows: a week here and a week there, and a long train journey on Sundays through the night to where they opened on Monday. The company would reserve two or more whole coaches, and there was apt to be, in spite of Prohibition, a festive party on the move for all on the Sunday evening. Double-decker aisles of sleeping-berths, curtained off, men and women mixed, formed a section of each coach, their aisles leading to the seating accommodation and dining-cars. One late Sunday evening the party, making a great deal of noise, was romping through the sleeping-car, and Plum's bald head looked out from the curtains of an

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upper berth, saying "Hush! She's asleep!" "A charming girl in the chorus, it was", said Bolton. But, being a gentleman, he couldn't remember her name.

I heard Bolton tell this story with two different endings. In the first, Plum's dear wife Ethel found a jeweller's receipt for a diamond bracelet in one of Plum's pockets and extracted a confession from him. In the other (which I prefer) Ethel met him and the party at Grand Central Station at the end of the tour, and he kissed her on the cheek instead of the lips. With typical feminine second sight she said, "Plummie, you've been having an *affaire*!" And silly Plummie, who meant to say, "Don't be absurd, Ethel!", said, "Who told you?"

I HAVE GONE INTO some detail of what was known, and what might have been added by Empsonian inference from one of the early short stories, of a period (1906-15) of P. G. Wodehouse's young life not otherwise much documented. If he was writing home to his mother, his letters to her have not survived. He was writing fairly often to his school friend, would-be artist, would-be writer, Bill Townend, but those letters, from the period 1899 to 1920, had not survived and *Performing Flea*, the book they published in 1953, was concocted from Wodehouse's letters from 1920 to 1952 . . . with many cuts, additions, and editings. He had given up his straight-from-school job at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank in London years ago. His English public-school novels and short stories could be put behind him. Though Mike Jackson and Psmith were still to emerge from his typewriter, there was no market in America for stories about cricket and footer, schoolroom rags, study frowsts with tea and sausages and no girls in sight anywhere. Not bad stuff, that, he thought later, but apprentice work, bringing in guineas while he was getting a toe-hold on his craft. In New York he had sold, or an agent had sold for him, two short stories in a single day to magazines for prices that made what English magazines paid him look paltry. He was going to write for dollars now, and so much the better if he could sell the stuff for guineas as well.

NOW SOME NEW LIGHT is thrown on Wodehouse's life, thinking, and writing in his New York years before World War I, and on the early months of his marriage, in New York, to English Ethel. At Sotheby's in New York recently, two Wodehouse lots were sold:

(*1*) Thirty-eight holograph letters, signed; two holograph postcards, signed; and one small snapshot, of Wodehouse in a squash court, signed. Their dates ran from September 1909 to June 1915. The recipient of all these was Wodehouse's English friend, Leslie Havergal Bradshaw, who was working on the editorial side of a New York magazine, *Success*.

(*2*) Three Notebooks with, in all, more than six hundred holograph jottings, in pencil mostly, from 1906 onwards: ideas for plots and verses, beginnings of stage lyrics, jokes, dry-runs of dialogue, good American phrases and slang, good remarks overheard, anecdotes, storiettes (as he called them) and, in the last Notebook, working scenarios for *The White Feather*, *Sunshine and Chickens* (this title was changed to *Love Among the Chickens*; and Wodehouse, at least for Bradshaw, acquired the nickname "Chickens") and *A Gentleman of Leisure*.

The Letters Lot was sold to Dr Ronald Levine, a gynaecologist and collector in Johannesburg. The Notebooks went to Edward Cazalet. Cazalet's mother was a daughter, from a previous marriage, of Wodehouse's wife Ethel. Wodehouse adopted Leonora and changed her surname to Wodehouse. Ethel Wodehouse (Lady Wodehouse) died in October last on Long Island, where they had had a house since 1955. She was just short of her hundredth birthday, due for 22nd May 1985. Edward Cazalet has been building a Wodehouse Archive at his home in Sussex—first editions, letters, manuscripts, photographs, and other memorabilia. The Sotheby hammer prices in dollars for those lots represented respectively a fat and a very fat four figures in sterling. Both Edward Cazalet and Ronald Levine have kindly supplied me with photocopies of what they bought, and I am grateful to them for allowing me to quote from this material.

The Letters

WODEHOUSE'S FIRST LETTERS to Leslie Bradshaw, in 1910, address him as "Dear Bradshaw" and are signed, "Yours ever P. G. Wodehouse." They are still on surname terms two years later. Then Wodehouse took to signing himself, "Yours ever PGW ('Chickens')." By September 1912 "Bradshaw" had become "Brad", and "Chickens" lasted to the end of the correspondence in January 1915. Wodehouse's novel *Psmith in the City* is dedicated to Bradshaw. Bradshaw's novel *The Right Sort* is dedicated "To P. G. Wodehouse, the right sort." There was a pen-portrait of Wodehouse by Bradshaw in *The Captain* of March 1909.

Bradshaw was himself trying to get established as a writer, specialising in public-school stories for the same English market in which Wodehouse had made a name and was to make a bigger name when Mike Jackson and Psmith met at Sedleigh (Mike having been removed from Wrykyn, Psmith from Eton). Bradshaw had offered Wodehouse help in selling his boys' books in America, but Wodehouse wanted none of that. In a letter dated simply "Tuesday", probably written in the autumn of 1909, he said to Bradshaw:

> "Thanks awfully for your letter. It's ripping of you wanting to give me a leg-up, but I'm afraid it wouldn't do. So far from wanting my boys' books published this side, I want to start here with a clean sheet as a writer of grown-up stories. The *Captain* books are all right in their way, but the point of view is too immature. They would kill any chances of doing anything big. . . . I want to butt into the big league. . . . I don't want people saying I was better than Andrew Home when I want them to think I'm better than O. Henry. The school stories have served their turn, and it would hurt my chances of success to have them bobbing up when I'm trying to do bigger work. I have given up boys' stories absolutely."

With the gift of the Notebooks, Wodehouse wrote:

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"Use any public-school stuff you like in accompanying notebooks, but don't swipe me other notes!"

The letters are mostly addressed from New York. But some, according to Wodehouse's movements, came from Bellport on Long Island, from London (the Constitutional Club, which he liked because nobody knew him there) and from Emsworth House, Hampshire. This was a boys' prep-school where Wodehouse's "slacker" friend Westbrook (part model for Ukridge) was an assistant master. Wodehouse at periods rented a room above a stable there, played football with the boys, and worked. He later rented, and later still bought, for £300, a house named Threepwood near the school. Threepwood, Warblington, Bosham, Bognor, Fittleworth, Rogate—Hampshire and Sussex names proved useful for the Emsworth family of Blandings, for two bishops, and for other characters in later books.

You find much the same pattern in the letters to Bradshaw as in the letters to Bill Townend. In the early years Wodehouse gives Bradshaw a good deal of advice about the manuscripts Bradshaw sends to him for professional comment. In the later years the letters are more, and mostly, about Wodehouse's own literary agonies and exultations: his acceptances and rejections by magazine editors, his fees, finances, and literary agents.

Sept 1909. "Have just sold a 5000-word story to *Collier's* for 300 dollars! Feeling pretty good in consequence."

March 30, 1910. He congratulates Bradshaw on "Tommy Castleton's Case" and on an article, "The American Boy", in *The Captain* (Vol. 23) that month. On the subject "What the American boy is reading" Bradshaw had written, "There are few private secondary schools, and none corresponding to the English 'public-school', and naturally there are not many school stories and none of the kind written by P. G. Wodehouse, R. S. Warren Bell, Fred Swainson etc. . . . There is no magazine like *The Captain*. . . ."

Thursday, probably summer 1910. Wodehouse is trying by guile to place a story, "Peaches", in Bradshaw's magazine *Success*. "Tell Merwin [the Editor] he should buy now while I am going cheap. Like buying your coals early in the summer. When the summer after next comes, and PGW stories are selling at $1000 apiece, they'll have theirs all ready, bought cheap before the rise, because honestly if I am getting 5 cents a word now, when I've just started, isn't it a cinch that I shall be getting more when 'Jimmy' [*The Intrusion of Jimmy*, its English title *A Gentleman of Leisure*] has had its run (and it has already sold more than 7,000 before publication) and the play is on [In the dramatisation of the novel Douglas Fairbanks Sr., at the start of his career, played the hero, Jimmy Pitt. The play was rewritten, and renamed *A Thief for the Night* in 1913 when John Barrymore, at the start of his career, played Jimmy] and probably another novel published? . . ."

May 5th 1910. "Two more stories sold to *The Strand* . . . that makes six they have taken altogether. I've just discovered a hole in my trousers. These are life's tragedies."

Monday ? 1910. Again a ruse. "Are you game to put in a little sneaky work for me? Show the enclosed story to Brubaker [at *Success*] and say you've got to send it back to me tomorrow as I'm going to send it off to *Collier's*, not offering it to Brubaker. If he says 'Not much good', bow out gracefully. If he says 'Hot Stuff!', say casually Wodehouse wants $600 for it and will keep it by him till he gets it."

Wodehouse had just sold a baseball story to *Collier's* for $300—probably "The Pitcher and the Plutocrat", which he changed into "The Goal-Keeper and the Plutocrat", published in *The Strand* in January 1912.

January 1911. "My next Black's book is the serial I wrote for *Chums*." This serial, written to a commission, was titled *The Luck Stone* and its author was given as Basil Windham. Wodehouse says somewhere that Bill Townend had given him the plot. He gave Townend some of the loot from *Chums*. *The Luck Stone* was a blood-and-thunder/maharajah's jewel/*Moonstone*/*Sign of Four* story set improbably in an English public school. In fact Black's didn't publish it as a book, and their records do not tell why. *The Luck Stone* has never been republished. Wodehouse tried other, more credible stories on *Chums*, but they were all rejected. Wodehouse's royalties on his school books from Black's in 1910 had come to £60.

Feb 10th 1911. Wodehouse, at Emsworth, had heard that Bradshaw's "mater" was thinking of leaving New York and living in England. Apparently Bradshaw lived with his mother and supported her. Wodehouse says he'll try to get Bradshaw a job with Newnes or Pearson's in London.

March 2nd 1911. "I wrote a story in three days. *The Strand* have taken it. When I have time to Americanise it, I'll send it along to you [to help him sell it in New York]."

April 3rd 1911. From Constitutional Club, London. "I'm sailing back to NY Saturday next in the Lusitania. It will be ripping being back. . . . If you, by some marvel, sell the serial [presumably *The Prince and Betty*], will you send me a wireless to the ship . . . just the price. I.e. the single word 'two' will mean 'Sold serial for $2000'. . . ."

May 3rd 1911. Hotel Earle. "Dear B, got to pop down town & whack up some money from my bankah!"

Saturday? 1911. "No luck yet. Three stories rejected in three days, including a new one, by *McClure's*."

Jan 26th 1912. From Mount Anville [where that?], *Emsworth, Hants.* "Good news. Black will publish your story in the autumn and will pay you 10%. Same terms as I got for *The Pothunters*. Very glad. Pity we couldn't get serialisation, though. Will you do this—go to Moyle's—see Hensl (Moyle's away) and find out what places my 'Dinner of Herbs' and 'Ruth in Exile' have been to and whether they are out now. If you can manage to get them away (on pretence of reading them) & see if you cd. place them somewhere? . . . I have an idea Moyle lost heart & shelved them. . . ."

May 21st 1912. "I had a friendly letter from Douglas Fairbanks yesterday in answer to mine of July last! American hustle!"

Sept 9th 1912. "I'm coming over on the Olympic in October . . . going to take a trip to San Francisco—get some local colour. I made 27 in 7 minutes for the Authors at Lord's before being stumped. . . . Last Saty I got 50 for our village & took 7 wickets. We had to run everything out. It nearly killed me. With boundaries I should have made a century. . . ."

Nov 22nd 1912. His trip to America has been cancelled.

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"*Brother Alfred* may come on quite soon [it did, at the Savoy, for a fortnight only: 'Ghastly frost!']. I'm busy dramatizing *The Little Nugget*. Here's a photograph of me in my squash-rackets costume. A condensed version of *The Nugget* appeared in *The Captain* as a 3-part serial. Nobody else would take it. . . ."

May 6th 1913. From Hotel Algonquin, New York. "This new place suits me far better than the Earle. Owing to Fairbanks and others recommending me, the management can't do enough for me. . . . Grossmith made me write and re-write *Brother Alfred* till all the punch was lost, and it ran to empty houses. I never saw such notices—all thoroughly well deserved. . . . I think Cohan and Harris will put on *The Little Nugget* in the fall. But it won't be plain sailing. The character of the crook ran away with the play so that it killed Fairbanks's part . . . i.e. a lot of re-writing will have to be done, as the crook will now be starred."

Sept 1st 1914. Wodehouse thinks *The Saturday Evening Post* will take a story he has sent in. His agent is now Mrs Wilkening. She has sold *The Man Upstairs*, 19 stories, to Famous Players, movie people. "If they pay $1000 per story, this will put me in shape to treat editors like so many tripe-hounds. . . . My ambition is to inaugurate a regular reign of terror. Meanwhile I simply can't get another idea for a short story. . . . About editors and agents . . . my real trouble is that I don't really like these people. . . . Life is infernally monotonous: work, feed, bed. In between stories it's rotten. That's why I have always enjoyed Emsworth. There was never a day without something breaking loose, if it was only the dog rolling, or one of the kids breaking a window. . . . I dined with Bob Davis last night [Davis was editor of a whole stable of "pulp" magazines in New York. Wodehouse sold him stories for these, and he found Davis very fertile with suggestions for plots]. Picked him up at his office. He was too tired to say a word hardly. Dined, talked spasmodically for about an hour, and then he turned me out, as he had a lot of manuscripts to read. It was New York all over. I never get any sense of repose with these devils. They either exhaust me with their excess of vitality or else are practically logs. . . ."

October 1st 1914. Hotel Astor, New York. "Dear Brad, excuse delay in answering letter. Been busy getting married . . . to Ethel Milton. Yours ever, Chickens." This was written the day after the wedding. Ethel Newton-Rowley was a lovely young English widow whom Wodehouse had met in New York on August 3rd, the day before England went to war with Germany. In this letter he had got his bride's name wrong, as he did, at first, on the marriage certificate.

October 10th 1914. From Bellport, Long Island. "Married life really is the greatest institution that ever was. When I look back and think of the rotten time I have been having all my life, compared with this, it makes me sick. And when I think that I was once actually opposed to your idea of getting married, I am amazed at myself. My latest and final announcement on the Brad-Olive situation is Get married at once and don't care a blow about anyone [Bradshaw's 'mater' had been opposed to his marrying Olive], because it is borne in on me very strongly that this business of marriage is so exclusively one's own business that it is ridiculous to let even one's mother have a say in it. The only point to be considered is finance. Do you feel that you can undertake the contract from a financial point of view? The idea of my talking prudence is pretty thick, seeing that I have at this moment $70 in the bank! But I am hoping for more eftsoons and right speedily. . . . Speaking as an old married man (ten days!) I think the main question about marriage is not so much whether you are in love with each other as whether you have the essential points in common which enable you to live with each other without getting on each other's nerves. I know you and Olive have. . . . I can only argue, of course, taking a line through my own case. All I know is that for the first time in my life I am absolutely happy. It is a curious thing about it that the anxieties seem to add to the happiness. The knowledge that it was up to one to support someone else has a stimulating effect. . . . Ethel sends her love. She liked you tremendously. She says you must come down when you can manage it, but says not until she has got a maid. However, that only means a day or two. Apparently maids are plentiful in these parts after the middle of this month." [Bradshaw married Olive.]

October 19th 1914. Bellport. "I have about $425 in the bank, besides my London savings. Living here is cheap. If I come to New York, I must get back early. A night here alone would give Ethel the willies! Dramatisation of *Little Nugget* dragging its feet. Still no maid."

October 24th 1914. "Ethel has come out very strong with three fine plots! I am working on them now. If she can keep this up, the maintenance of the home is a cinch! I never appreciated married life so much as last night. I came home, tired and hungry, after having walked out from Patchogue and having had nothing to eat for hours, and there was a fine dinner and a blazing fire, and E. fussing over me, and all sorts of good things. It was perfectly ripping. . . . We are still without a maid, but I have developed a wonderful liking for washing dishes. I find it stimulates thought and is generally soothing. So I am going to take on that department till we get a maid. We have two kittens and a puppy now. The puppy kept us awake the night before last from 2.30 onwards."

January 20th 1915. "I found Reynolds [Paul Reynolds, Wodehouse's new literary agent in America] a very good sort indeed. He was pleasantly different from Seth and Mrs Wilkening and didn't make one windy promise of selling my stuff for millions. . . . He is a man of a certain position, thank goodness. What I mean is that he belongs to decent clubs, where he presumably doesn't get tight, and that is a great thing. One always felt about Seth that at any moment he might disappear into nowhere with a lot of one's money and never appear again. Reynolds seems to be one of the aristocrats of the profession. The first man we met in the club was Scribner, and his attitude towards Reynolds was a sort of respectful chumminess. Horrid thought: was it a 'property' Scribner, a pal of Reynolds simply engaged to pretend to be Scribner so as to impress me! . . . Have you ever read *The Guest of Quesnay* by Booth Tarkington? It is one of the best books I have read recently. I thought of writing to congratulate him, but prudence intervened. I want to crib his heroine, and it is imperative that, if denounced, I shall be able to say 'I never read any *Guest of Quesnay*. Who is this Booth Tarkington of whom you speak??' . . . Mrs Westbrook

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wrote to say she had a big deal on with the movie rights of my stories, and a few days ago cabled me to suggest prices as a basis for her to work on, so it really looks as if there were something doing, though I don't want to be too sanguine after the Wilkening fiasco." Wodehouse's friend Westbrook, assistant master at Emsworth House prep-school, which was a model for the prep-school in *The Little Nugget*, had married Ella King-Hall, sister of the headmaster. She had written the music for *The Bandit's Daughter*, a musical sketch by Wodehouse and Westbrook: not successful. She had for some time been working as a literary agent, for Wodehouse and others.

June 3rd 1915. Bellport, Long Island. Wodehouse has sold a story to *The Saturday Evening Post* for $500. This puts him in the 10-cents-a-word class. They have a car. Ethel is a very good driver. Dulwich reports a magnificent football season last year. They have a "freak wing ¾, who was 6ft and 11½ stone at the age of 14. He has scored lots of tries in all the school matches and has two more years. Mizzi has 4 kittens."

June 25th 1915. "I am re-writing *Brother Alfred* for Lawrence Grossmith for a musical play in the fall. Jerome Kern is doing the music. Douglas Fairbanks is a good sort. . . ."

The Notebooks

FOR HIS PURPOSE OF writing English boys' school stories, Bradshaw would have found most nourishment in the first and earliest of the three Notebooks Wodehouse gave him. There are several long musings, with recognisable Dulwich names in them, about school affairs. In his own public school stories and novels—about Wrykyn, Sedleigh, Ripton, Eckleton and St Austin's—Wodehouse made his headmasters minor characters but major powers: more spoken about than speaking, men of quality and authority, with butlers at their doors, distant from the dust and heat of inter-House and inter-School games rivalries and in-House raggings. In his prime, in the Mulliner stories (e.g. "The Bishop's Move" and "The Voice from the Past", and the Jeeves story "The Inferiority of Old Sippy"), the headmasters are comic heavies. In an item in Notebook Number 1, Wodehouse broods on Gilkes, the "Old Man" of Wodehouse's years as a boy at Dulwich College.

> "*For School Stories*—Write one round a headmaster like Gilkes, who tries to rule by kindness. When he catches anybody breaking rules v. flagrantly, he makes him a school prefect. The chap, thus getting more liberty, thinks the Old Man a fool & becomes worse than ever. Might make hero of story head of the school, whose best laid schemes are thwarted by this tendency of O.M's. Show his growing despair.
>
> In re Gilkes:—he does not in the least understand the moral blindness and callousness of boys. Thus he thinks that by apologising to a boy, he will touch his heart and make him repent and turn over a new leaf. Not a bit of it. Boy thinks he has scored off Old Man, tells everybody he has made him apologise to him, thinks him a damned weak fool, & runs amok. *Boys respect strength, nothing but strength.* They may dislike it, but they respect it. A school is like a child. The mother who alternately spoils and storms at a child makes it unmanageable. Same with headmaster & school. Gilkes goes on apologising to everyone, even when he is in the right, & then when they get out of hand he makes them worse by stopping a concert or field day or, worse still, by saying he has stopped it, & then giving way at the last moment. As an example of Gilkes' folly, the other day he was arguing with Lawrion about something, & L. actually said: 'I disagree with you entirely & I do not wish to hear a word more!' He was saved from sudden death by the entrance of Hope who wished to discuss something with the Old Man. Later the O.M. met Lawrion, & putting a hand on his shoulder, said, 'Well, L., I hope you have got over your temper!' Naturally a story like that gets about, & chaps lose their respect for him.
>
> Another point in which G. failed was this. After an exceptionally good athletic year, as Dulwich had when Northcote was footer captain, there comes a relapse, & the school, all its best men having left, gets beaten in matches. Then school gets restless and out of hand. That is the time to tighten the reins. He loosened them.
>
> Nearly all the prefects have had their caps taken away & given back. The value of prefect's cap has sunk lower than ever before."

And

> "The Classical Sixth Form is really the criterion of the school. In my time we were all big & all colours & could have played the rest of the school at anything. There was consequently no disorder. Now, in 1905, the Sixth was actually unable to turn out a footer team of 15 men, & playing only 8, got beaten by the Science Sixth. No wonder the School is disorderly."

THE THIRD NOTEBOOK contains early scenarios or episodes for novels that are recognisable as *The Gold Bat* (published 1904), *Love Among The Chickens* (1906), *The White Feather*—it was to have been *The Honour of the House*—(1907), and *A Gentleman of Leisure*—discarded titles, *The Amateur* and *The Black Sheep*—(1910). There is also a group of notes of what was to have been a stage farce entitled *The Bishop*. There is quite a lot of preliminary scribbling when Wodehouse was trying to clarify a plot for what became "The Good Angel." That was the earliest Wodehouse story in which a butler plays a strong part, and the first of several uses of Keggs as a butler's name. "The Good Angel" starts, you may remember:

> "Any man under thirty years of age who tells you he is not afraid of an English butler lies. Outwardly he may be brave—aggressive even, perhaps to the extent of calling the great man 'Here!' or 'Hi!'. But in his heart, when he meets that cold, blue, introspective eye, he quakes. . . ."

And here in the Notebook is a first scribble:

> "Open. 'Any young man says not afraid butler lies. One

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called a butler "Here you!" once. But he was never the same man again. Yet many a butler has a heart of gold.'"

One plot, perhaps rightly, never got beyond the single page at the end of Notebook 3:

Strict Training

"X., young ass with legacy comes up from country town and becomes a bounder. Y, a chorus girl, shows partiality for him, practically cuts him out with another c.g.; X very flattered. Tries to kiss her. She knocks him out. Sends Z, husky stolid chap, to train him. (Mem: She is going to marry Z if he makes a man of X.) She says in her note that it takes eight days to get a new idea into Z's head & that his one idea now is to train X. Describe how Z shadows X, makes him run in Park early in morning, take cold baths, & go to bed early etc. X tries to get rid of Z (how?). Finally comes to Y, & says he is in good condition & is quitting for home. Thanks her & asks why she took the trouble. She says she is his fiancée's sister."

Of the other hundreds of items, in all three Notebooks, very few have emerged recognisably (to me) in the Wodehouse published *oeuvre*. A good deal of Wodehouse ephemera has appeared in print but has not yet been identified and republished. His *The Luck Stone* contained a cheery Indian boy at an English public school, a ragger named Ram. But Ram came, surely, from F. Anstey's "Baboo Jabberjee" in *Punch*. There are no pratice swings in these Notebooks at Ram's orotund, book-learned mishmashing of English. In *The Globe*, a London evening paper, Wodehouse's "By The Way" column—a dozen or so short snippets and a set of verses—was a distant and comparatively pallid forerunner of Beachcomber's "By The Way" in the *Daily Express*. Some of the items in these Notebooks may have gone into that. Wodehouse and Townend did "Answers to Correspondents" in *Tit-Bits* for a period in 1908. These have never been brought to book. Wodehouse wrote, under a variety of names, "extras" for the elegant monthly New York magazine, *Vanity Fair*, besides being its theatre critic, a job he handed on to Dorothy Parker. He contributed anonymous bits and pieces, verse and prose, to *Punch* for a decade from 1902 onwards. These have not yet been dredged and collected for republication. We may yet discover that Wodehouse worked up, and made into guinea-earning *obiter scripta*, more than a handful of these pencil-jottings That was certainly their purpose in the beginning. At random, then:

"He was the sort of person who would take every egg out of a nest and excuse himself on the ground that he was preventing (in the future) cruelty to worms."

"You haven't got a mind. You run along on a cheap substitute of putty and mud."

"It is a terrible thing to wake suddenly to the knowledge that one is not a genius."

"Two months later he appeared with many apologies and a beard."

"Pringle's grandmother died when that youth was still unable to speak. To this cause may be attributed the fact that he never taught her to suck eggs."

"*Of a baby's smile*: a slit appeared in the baby's face."

"*Of a man who was too much addicted to the pleasures of the table*: His exit (from life) was hastened by his entrées."

"*Americanisms*: She talked a blue streak. Get a wiggle on (i.e. buck up). Scared stiff. A peach of a pencil. He's not worth two bits. He makes me tired."

"*For a nonsense poem*: Policeman was also a burglar, at last arrested himself and got promotion and penal servitude simultaneously."

"*For frightful pathos*: Blind man writes stories, his one amusement. His wife pretends they are accepted, though they are invariably refused, and reads them out to him as though from magazines."

"*For a poem*: 'The Soft-hearted Heavyweight'." [Perhaps this man was remembered for Ukridge's champion, Battling Billson?]

Quotes from or about people . . . his friend Westbrook, his elder brother Armine, Conan Doyle, Cosmo Hamilton, W. S. Gilbert, Gilkes, Margie ("says if you ever want a free ride, hunt about at the bottom of a cab with a match at the end of a ride, then go indoors saying you have lost a sovereign in the cab and are going for more matches, telling cabby to wait. When you come back, c. will have departed"):

" 'Looks like a sinful butler' said by Mrs Belloc Lowndes of Humphry Ward, 1905."

"Instead of saying 'All was jolly, jollity and song', JEG says 'All was j, j & s.'." [Perhaps that was the seed for a later flowering, in Bertie Wooster's burble, of cliché phrases cut down to their first letters, as 'I sank into a c. and passed an agitated h. over the b.' in *The Code of the Woosters*.]

"Oliver Rae re Seymour Hicks bullying his wife who adores him. 'Women like being bullied. At least they don't exactly like it, but they like the man who does it.' " Later an asterisk against the name Hicks gets a gloss: "Later bulletin (1906). This is a lie. He doesn't. PGW."

"*For Punch?* 'The Bank Opera.' Hero's song:

She wore a hat of novel style.
Her eyes were azure stars.
And, with a soft bewitching smile
She spoke to me through bars.
Ah, yes, she spoke to me and oh!
I felt I'd perish for her,
But duty bade me answer 'No
Effects, Refer to drawer.'
Chorus: *To duty's call he bowed and so*
Referred her to the drawer."

"*Mem for Windsor or Punch*. Barry Painful article:—the man who took up as his profession the extinction of bores. He was a man of vast information, & if anybody had a friend staying with them who persisted in collaring the

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conversation, on any subject, the man was sent for & by means of his superior information crushed him (e.g. the Switzerland and foreign travel bore: the children's story bore etc). Mem. Might make this a long story. A sort of Dr. Watson friend to tell the story, & the tale to begin by person calling in the expert for advice, as he has a man staying with him who is a combination of all the sorts of bore known."

"Curious characteristic of the female mind, the love of *teasing*. Men never do it. E.g. MEL and EHML. Joan on the other hand does not do it. Why?"

Gags, nifties, captions, one-liners . . . there are hundreds more where those came from. One reads a professional humorist's notebooks at one's peril—the peril of thinking, "Good Lord, did Wodehouse think that funny?" Actually, no. But he saw capabilities in it, as Lancelot Brown could see in a nobleman's estate a capability for landscaping: as an oyster, perhaps, feeling a piece of grit in his shell, works on it till it becomes a pearl.

THREE MORE ENTRIES, for variety:

"*Impressions of visit to Laurence Housman.* I had expected to find him drooping and yearning over a lily. Brisk, cheerful man with a pleasant smile: total absence of poetic pose: caricatures his friends, and rags about it with them: Miss H. rather soulful; the room unpapered, but distempered in cream colour: candles: benedictine & chartreuse: whisky: L. H. says, when I ask him to dilute it, that he hates to see anything drowned, whether it's cats or whisky: not enough chairs: L. H. expressed an opinion that a couple can do very well with two comfortable chairs and a settee, but they mustn't give an At Home. 'Poetry', says L. H. 'is the language of the brain': e.g. some poems you can't bear to hear read to you, because the sound of the voice seems an intrusion. He can always work better in London than the country, because in the country he feels too well to do anything but be a mere animal: he wants to feel rather ill to work." [Didn't brother Alfred Housman say that poetry came to him more easily if he had a slight indigestion?]"

"*Mems about Conan Doyle.*

(*a*) Sent *Micah Clarke* to James Payne, & got back J. P.'s usual illegible letter. At last managed to decipher the first sentence. It ran 'How can you, how *can* you waste your wits and your time writing historical novels?' 'Nice & encouraging that, wasn't it?' says C. D. 'Just for a start, y'know.'

(*b*) Was sent in his early days a picture of two girls & a boy in a yacht by *Cassell's* to write story to. Thinks that was the lowest depth to which he has ever sunk.

(*c*) 'A man who does anything worth reading at 21 is going to make his name. You write better at 30 than at 21, & better at 40 than at 30.'

(*d*) 'The life of an author is divided into 2 parts. During the first he goes to the publishers. During the 2nd they come to him. Then he begins to get a bit of his own back.' [Cf. perhaps, Arnold Bennett's ambition . . . to get his bank manager to come and see *him*.]

(*e*) 'If you can write so as to please schoolboys, you will do well. There is no better critic (within limits) than a schoolboy.'

(*f*) 'A man who can manage a cricket team on tour & see that they don't think the match is next week & don't lose their cricket-bags & don't let their wives get ill the day before a match is fit to govern a colony.'

(*g*) 'The success of a book is a gamble. Reviews of the ordinary sort don't help it much. Of course if a critic says it's the very finest book that has appeared for the last ½ century, then people may be influenced by it. But if he simply says it's good work, nothing comes of it.'

(h) When I told him that if I liked a book, I liked to buy it & keep it, he said, 'Ah, but you're a young literary man. The public aren't all young literary men. I wish they were.'"

And:

"*Jim Deane's description of corpses in S. Africa.*

(*a*) Corpse of a black boy killed by other black boys of Remount Dept: age 14: lying in the sun 2 days: all swollen: throat cut from ear to ear: body stark naked & covered with black blood: arms stretched back where somebody had knelt on them, & legs straight out, having been sat on while boy was being killed. Motive for murder probably because he cheated his pals at gambling. It was a Saturday night, when they get their pay.

(*b*) a corpse looks like clay: grey cheekbones: nostrils dried up: eyes half closed: limbs stiff & pointing in all directions."

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WAR & PEACE

"Peace Seekers"

A Peaceful Weekend

By Jessica Gwynne

IN THE SUMMER OF LAST YEAR I had just come back from Poland, and as usual when returning from Eastern Bloc countries, I was preoccupied with the political despair of my friends and acquaintances there. It is a platitude to say that they live "under totalitarian rule"; nevertheless what this means in practice struck me as insufficiently understood by many opinion-makers in the West. Our Eastern European friends, governed by an apparatus exercising tyrannical powers, can have no real recourse to law in their dealings with the authorities. Citizens have no bargaining-power to alter the terrible injustices that they suffer, and their whole civil experience is turned in on itself by this. I was therefore exposed to their incredulity at many aspects of our Western political attitudes. In particular they were amazed and disheartened by the European "Peace Movement", and its call to disarm unilaterally in the face of the dark actuality of Soviet power. As they saw it, all such movements had come too late. A war was already being waged, not against the West, but against the very idea of civil society by a power which recognised no terms other than those dictated by itself.

While I was thinking in this vein, a friend passed to me a letter from the School of Peace Studies at Bradford University. It asked for anyone interested to attend a conference in order to "discuss the intellectual issues and practical problems involved in teaching peace in higher education." The "Peace Movement" in Britain is well known through the activities of CND, and what I know of "Peace Education" led me to think that it, too, was not entirely detached from that organisation. I therefore began to wonder how the "peace educationists" present their subject. With concern about Poland on my mind, what better way to go further into such complicated questions than by offering a contribution to the conference? I wished to point out that, if there is a serious subject of "Peace Studies" it must surely be able to tell us what the word "peace" means, and to show us why certain conditions, which seem to be, in E. H. Carr's phrase, "the conditions of peace", are in fact no such thing.

Having been confronted with the reality of the "*Pax Sovietica*" and the Communist Party propaganda involving the word "peace",[1] I felt that we could understand the true meaning of this word only if we first studied something of the everyday life and dominant ideology of the Soviet bloc. For, whatever "peace" means, it is extremely doubtful that anyone living in that bloc is "at peace." I therefore suggested a way of putting the question of the meaning of "peace" before the minds of those who seek to understand it. Perhaps we should look into the works of writers and artists who have lived, or continue to live, under such totalitarian rule—and in particular the work of those (Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, Havel) who have cared about the truth, and who have sought in their various ways to be "at peace" with themselves and with a world which they never made.

I ARRIVED AT Bradford, a solid, rather beautiful Victorian town, at midday, and found my way to the modern university. Inside I passed by various CND slogans and having a few minutes to spare I looked at the bookshop, replete with books and brochures for the course in Peace Studies. Should I have been surprised not to see any that expounded the view that peace could be secured (as it has been for 40 years) through deterrence? My spirits fell when receiving change of four single pound notes—each one was heavily defaced in ink with the CND symbol. Armed in the conference hall with a folder full of the papers which were to be presented, I listened as Professor J. M. O'Connell, Head of the School of Peace Studies, gave the opening address. It started in a most encouraging way, dissecting various attitudes to peace, and conceding that "concern for peace is clearly not confined to those who group themselves in the peace movement. . . ."

I was struck by Professor O'Connell's rather philosophical approach; but also by the entirely speculative character of his paper. It was as if he were contemplating the start of a new project, rather than an analysis of the results of many years' research and study. Could that be normal academic practice? Surely those who feel somewhat sceptical about the nature of "peace studies" as an academic discipline have a justified desire for intellectual substance, a desire which neither O'Connell nor any other of the speakers was able to satisfy. At one point Professor O'Connell interrupted his speculations with a curious political aside: "The Bradford School of Peace Studies", we were told, "is not an activist enterprise." However, "it serves instead to provide activists with the academic resources which they need." As he later said, by way of clarifying his own position: "The Polaris submarines give me a nightmare rather than the impression of being guarded in my sleep. . . ."

There was a break for tea, and then Professor Black from Princeton University, Dr Burt from the Open University and I (introduced as a stage-designer and artist), appeared on the platform. Dr Burt's paper consisted almost entirely of charts which he displayed on a screen. These charts—with arrows, boxes and lines, leading up at last to "the emancipation of the mind"—were evidently meant to show the nature and purpose of peace education. I had, perhaps naively, assumed that an academic paper should present the semblance of an

[1] See Vladimir Bukovsky's brochure *The Peace Movement and the Soviet Union.* (Orwell Press, London, 1981).

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argument, supported occasionally by facts which could, in turn, be validated by quotations from authorities and texts. Measured against this innocent expectation, Dr Burt's paper seemed far from serious; nevertheless it certainly purported to address itself to serious questions. I quote from the official Abstract:

> "What should peace education consist of? Logically, an answer to this depends on an understanding of world society, on an understanding of education in society, and on some system of values. Conflicts between understandings and between values give rise to major debates in peace research, and these debates are carried over into the curriculum. My own analysis of the nuclear problem derives from a general theory of society and social change. This implies a peace curriculum involving General Theory, Problems, Prescriptions, and Strategies for Change. The education *process* involves mutual development of reasoning skills, experience, theories, values and actions. Importantly it involves emancipation from dominant prejudices and biases. In content and in process, there is a need for positive (caring) goals and positive (caring) actions. Peace education contributes to peace by providing a deeper understanding of society, a development of moral values, and appreciation of what strategies are necessary for bringing about a better world."

Clearly, if peace studies are what Dr Burt claims them to be, they constitute not only an ambitious subject—involving almost every science known to man—but are dependent on real academic skills. Yet we were offered no advice as to how to acquire such skills. I watched chart after chart appear on the screen, and my attempt to assimilate educational platitudes and mystic diagrams only served to make me feel slightly insane. I was distressed to learn later that Dr Burt is Reader in Education at the Open University and therefore "expert" in the training of teachers. For it is precisely teachers who are being most encouraged to introduce "Peace Education" into their special fields of competence. Dr Burt offered them a "consciousness-raising" exercise, of a kind that would hardly seem like serious pedagogy even in a class of scientologists. Education is certainly a process of emancipation, but is it, as Dr Burt holds, a process of emancipation "from national location, from cultural location, from social location and from academic location"? Mere rootlessness as an educational ideal? Was there not a real *educational* purpose in providing pupils with the culture, national history, and loyalty that are essentially their own? Dr Burt says not. "The person trapped in these locations typically possesses damaging ideologies", among which, he argues, we must include "competition", "nationality" and "legitimacy." Were Dr Burt's trained teachers to free their pupils from all ideas of nationality, from all competition with their fellows, and from the natural desire to see the world in terms of an idea of legitimacy? My worst fears were being confirmed. I thought of the problem in General Jaruzelski's Poland and the significance of "Martial Law." If Dr Burt's programme is typical of peace education, then pupils are not being shown the real meaning or the real consequences that ensue when ideas of legitimacy no longer inform the apparatus of government. The vacuum of legitimacy in Eastern Europe has been filled by crude power, and it is this that has deprived Eastern Europeans of a true basis for peaceful existence.

Professor Black began with the Cold War and then quickly jumped to problems of the Environment. We were also told about Princeton's "modernisation studies" and its "world order studies." Both seemed to involve studying in the broadest possible way the transformation of societies in modern conditions. I couldn't help feeling that if peace is so important an issue, and one to which a whole academic discipline is supposed to address itself, it is strange that we were being treated, yet again, to a mixture of academic platitudes and contentious political utterances. Professor Black put it to us that the Soviet Communist Party was an instrument of political participation, whose primary function is to take count of the variety of interests within Soviet society by "an extensive and continuing dialogue. . . ." One could be forgiven for thinking that the good old distinction, well treated in Princeton's sociology courses, between influence and control might have been relevant here (or were *GPU*, *NKVD*, and *KGB* all experts on round-table conversation?).

THROUGHOUT THE FOLLOWING three days similar papers, long in delivery and short on fact, were delivered. For all Professor O'Connell's good intentions, the papers suggested that "Peace Education" is dominated by rhetoricians who, far from wanting to discuss what might be called first principles, prefer the heady moral atmosphere implied in their chosen calling of "Peace Research." There was the ever-present insinuation that people who might wish to study historical realities, and particularly the causes and consequences of war,[2] are those who actually want conflict. No participant seemed prepared to conceive that a serious study of war might be the best intellectual preparation for anyone who wishes to avoid it. The subject of "Peace Studies", as defined in the papers, seemed to be nothing more than a set of semi-moral, semi-ideological attitudes. The assorted participants from several countries were, I noted, representatives of subjects which were often far from academic disciplines in any precise or proper sense. I had been grateful for this, not being an academic myself; but it says something about the subject that "a stage-designer and artist" was welcome, along with the man who represented a parliamentary "liaison group for alternative strategies", a senior lecturer in "social work", and a representative of "People-for-a-Non-Nuclear-World."

In my paper, I had discussed the nature of peace, drawing partly on the classical discussions of St Augustine and Spinoza, and partly on the contemporary work of writers and artists who have attempted to articulate their experience of totalitarian society. I conceded that "peace is worth fighting for", but only because it is a state of spiritual potential and

[2] See Professor Michael Howard's recent book *The Causes of War* (1984) and, in ENCOUNTER, his article "The Concept of Peace" (December 1983).

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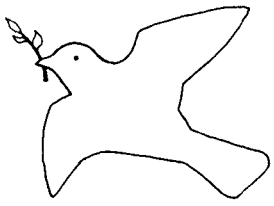
tolerant coexistence, from which man's quest for social and religious fulfilment can begin. "True peace" surely involves upholding the right to disagree and oppose—a right that has been extinguished in our time over half of Europe.

I know, of course, that anyone who tried to argue such a case in a CND meeting of "peace fighters" would be rudely opposed. The Bradford conference, however, was not supposed to be a gathering of activists but an academic colloquium. The response of the audience was, therefore, somewhat surprising. I was interrupted at one point by loud contemptuous guffawing from a bearded gentleman. As I spoke on, two girls decided quietly to cry. Finally, after I concluded, the members of the audience launched a concerted attack on me, ignoring altogether the papers of Professor Black and Dr Burt, which, being the work of experts in their field, ought to have principally occupied their attention. An Irish critic challenged me, quite obscurely, to provide a "conceptual" basis for my argument. Others charged me with introducing "irrelevant considerations", and making "unwarranted assumptions" about the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union. I was particularly amused by Professor Fahey (Head of the "Peace Studies" programme

From "Peace Studies" to "Hole Studies"



CONCERN *has recently been expressed over the nature of Peace Studies as an educational discipline, and over the effects of its introduction into schools. We argue that this concern is justified, that both the subject itself and the intentions of many who propagate it are open to serious criticism, and that it is educationally desirable to exclude Peace Studies from schools. Our grounds for these conclusions may be briefly summarised as follows:*

(1) Peace Studies is not a genuine educational discipline, and therefore cannot be taught as one.

(2) The existing programmes proposed by major exponents of the subject clearly favour a conclusion which we believe to be mistaken.

(3) The subject is taught in such a way as to discourage critical reflection, and encourage prejudice, about the matters of peace, war and disarmament—matters which are of the first importance for the future of this country and of mankind.

(4) The movement for Peace Studies in schools is part of a trend towards the politicisation of education, involving both the lowering of intellectual standards and the assumption of foregone political conclusions. It is our belief that the foregone conclusions in question are immensely damaging to our national interests, and favourable to those of the Soviet Union. But we stress that our case against Peace Studies is in no way dependent upon that belief; it is, we hope, equally convincing to those who do not share it, and who perceive Soviet strategy and Soviet interests in terms other than ours.

(5) The reality of Peace Studies ought not to be confused with its apparent, and innocuous, purpose—that of encouraging children to resolve their conflicts through tolerance and conciliation rather than by force, to understand each other's differences and to address one another always with the words and gestures of peaceful cooperation. This innocuous purpose, we argue, is better understood in terms of the traditional concept of good manners. For then it will be seen that it has always been a part of education, that it has nothing to do with the discussions that allegedly distinguish Peace Studies as a "subject", and that it is never less likely to be taught well than when confused with problems of political and military analysis.

NOT EVERY SUBJECT *can be taught to pupils of every age and attainment. While mathematics or history are respectable subjects at almost every level—school, undergraduate and postgraduate—other subjects are not. Some (such as law and philosophy) can be studied most fruitfully only at the higher level, by someone who has acquired at school the background necessary to understand them. Others (such as mathematical logic, social choice theory, medieval neo-Platonism) involve the application or extension of a university discipline that is already acquired. They may be "options" within some central field of undergraduate study, or subjects of postgraduate research. But they could not provide the sole substance of a first degree. They can be studied only by someone who acquires his principal discipline from some other source.*

THE MOVEMENT **to establish Peace Studies as a respectable discipline has sought to depict this subject as being appropriate at all levels of study: at school (from primary school to sixth form), as a university degree and as a field of postgraduate research. We deny that Peace Studies can constitute a clearly defined subject at *any* level. In particular, we believe that Peace Studies is not a respectable subject for a first degree, and is even less respectable—indeed, downright disreputable—as a part of the school curriculum.**

IN RECENT YEARS *a movement has arisen towards "relevance at all costs." It is a mark of this movement that the subjects which it countenances have a tendency to incorporate the word "studies" in their names: "Women's Studies", "Black Studies", "Gay Studies", "Sports Studies"—roughly, "for any relevant* x, *X Studies." The major question that is asked is the question of relevance. Is it relevant? If so, study it. However, to assume that an academic discipline will emerge as a result is to beg every serious educational question. It is clear, for example, that human beings have a great interest in holes; in the holes in shirts which need mending, in the holes in the ground that need avoiding, in black holes, foxholes and keyholes, in holes in the head and holes in an argument. Holes are undeniably relevant. Could there then be such a subject as "Hole Studies", designed to concentrate the mind on this fundamental aspect of the human condition? If there could, then we should all be the better for it. For example, we might be able to ascertain the truth of Laurence Sterne's assertion (in "Tristram Shandy")—until now no better than airy speculation—that "there is more sin and wickedness have entered the world through keyholes than through all other holes put together". . . .*

Caroline Cox
Roger Scruton

This has been excerpted from a paper on "Peace Studies: A Critical Survey", published by the Institute for European Defence & Strategic Studies.

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at Manhattan College) who vehemently questioned my "credentials"; he had not come all the way across the Atlantic, he said, to hear a paper totally devoid of academic rigour and authority. This, at the moment, seemed to be an almost Kafkaesque response, reflecting the real mood of the audience. No paper at the conference was remotely of a high academic standard; most were largely unsupported by argument and authority and intellectually vague in tone. If mine offended, surely it was not for this reason, but rather because it offered alternatives to the advocates of alternatives—conclusions unacceptable to the "peace movement" generally, and to the supporters of "unilateral disarmament" in particular. How could I have an academic right to present an unfashionable argument? It was as though academic method had been so confused by the Peace Educators with their strong commitment to "unilateralism", that no one could question their favoured conclusions without at once appearing to have offended scholarship, science, philosophy, and human ethics.[3]

THEN UP SPOKE Professor Mack from Australia, who had sat quietly throughout, and who now protested that he had not come all the way from Australia to hear the old East/West conflict discussed. Could I therefore be relegated to a side corridor in the building, along with anyone else who might be interested, so that all the others could continue with the *real* issues? I tried to ask him why, since the East/West conflict—i.e. the nuclear confrontation of the Superpowers—was taken to be the main threat to world peace, should we not discuss it? Perhaps the answer would have been worth travelling to Bradford "all the way" up from London.

Finally, a sociable young man suggested that we all go on to a nice party instead of discussing such "aggressive" topics. He was seconded by a polytechnic teacher from Newcastle. Professor O'Connell diplomatically re-established order by ending the seminar and rearranging the after-dinner speakers so as to include some of the academic critics of "Peace Studies" who, alerted like myself to the existence of this extraordinary conference, had decided to be present. . . .

I THOUGHT of my recent trip to Warsaw and what I might write to my friends there. Had I taken their names in vain? Should I tell them that my invocation of Bukovsky, Kundera, and Havel had fallen on deaf ears? And that here too dissent can be judged uncomfortable and, in the end, intolerable to those with an ideological need for an absolute unity of purpose? I decided merely to send the papers from the conference, so as to show my friends that in the West, too, propaganda could wear an "academic" face.

Perhaps the teachers of "Peace Studies" will note the significance of the fact that I had to send the papers underground.

[3] Later Professor Fahey said (to Julian Lewis) that because of his own particular bias on some issues he could not really make out a case for certain other courses of study. He therefore asked his colleagues to deal with such topics for him.
"The Sandinista campaign against the Somoza régime in Nicaragua was the nearest I could find to a Just War", he confessed.

The Lessons of the "Peace Offensive"

By Julian Lewis

A FEW DAYS AFTER the clearance of anti-nuclear protestors from the site of Britain's second Cruise missile base, at Molesworth early in February, a letter from a Communist member of the Executive Committee of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the 1960s was published in the *Morning Star*. "It is necessary for Communists to acknowledge that the Western peace movements had four years to prevent Cruise missiles coming to Europe and failed to do so", wrote Minnie Oberman, adding for good measure that this failure had "left the Soviet Union no alternative but to counter this new danger."

That the self-styled "peace movement" is politically in decline is now obvious to all but the most partisan observers of the British scene. Yet few, if any, have drawn attention to the fact that CND, a movement founded 27 years ago, has achieved prominence for only two relatively short periods—from 1958 until about 1964 and from 1980 until the end of 1983.

The reason is that both these periods immediately preceded the times at which decisions taken, or soon to be taken, about nuclear weapons in this country had to be implemented. It was apparent in the late 1950s that Britain could no longer exclusively rely on her first-generation strategic nuclear delivery system, the manned bomber force. Would it be augmented or superseded by land-based missiles, sea-launched missiles, air-launched "stand-off" bombs, or by nothing at all? Once the choice of *Polaris* became a *fait accompli*, the anti-nuclear lobby went into a state of limbo from which it was to be rescued only by NATO's "twin-track" decision of December 1979.

Why was this resurrection so unexpected? The decision to deploy Cruise and *Pershing II* missiles in the absence of any arms-control agreement was, of course, intended to reassure

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West Europeans worried about the massive and continuing deployment, from 1977 onwards, of Soviet *SS-20s*. Though often referred to as a threat to West European cities, the main danger of these weapons was that their enhanced accuracy would enable NATO's military infrastructure to be crippled *without* causing sufficient civilian casualties to render credible a threat to retaliate against Soviet cities. Cruise and *Pershing II*, while not matching the *SS-20s* warhead-for-warhead in Europe, would nevertheless preclude a Soviet monopoly of the ability to mount such an attack.

Because the 1979 decision was not due to begin to be implemented until 1983, however, the "twin-track" announcement (Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's famous *Doppelbeschluss*) was tantamount to an open invitation to the anti-nuclear movement that it had four full years to try to frustrate deployment. One factor which probably lulled NATO into a belief that the reality of Soviet imperialism was sufficiently impressed upon the societies of the West was the invasion of Afghanistan, which also took place in December 1979. In fact, that aggression offered no such guarantee, as an article published within days of the invasion by the *Los Angeles Times* editorial writer Ernest Conine brilliantly predicted. Entitled "NEW SOVIET PEACE DRIVE A MATTER OF TIME?", it concluded that:

> "The Soviet leaders must have known that their Afghan adventure would trigger countermoves by Washington. You have to assume that they are counting on being able to stop the reaction before it goes far enough to do permanent damage to Soviet interests.
>
> The Russians probably figure, in short, that they need only let a few months go by, that the passions aroused by the invasion of Afghanistan will fade, and that American public opinion will be ripe for another Soviet peace offensive, complete with calls for cuts in military spending.
>
> Soviet troops would remain in Afghanistan. The Kremlin would still be in a position to take another bite when the time was right. The Soviet Union's own mostly secret defense budget would continue to go up and up. Meanwhile, though, the Soviets could again enjoy the fruits of detente. Or so they may figure."

In 1968, the invasion of Czechoslovakia had produced only a relatively short break in the general quest for *détente*:

> "Less than four years after Soviet tanks rolled into Prague, Leonid Brezhnev was signing the SALT I treaty and exchanging hugs and kisses with none other than Richard Nixon, the old anti-Communist . . . the Russians are obviously gambling . . . that US determination will soon give way to wishful thinking about Soviet purposes in the world.
>
> If the Soviet leaders turn out to be wrong, their occupation of Afghanistan may indeed turn out to be a blunder of historic proportions. But if the past is really prologue, they probably aren't wrong."

What the NATO governments failed to appreciate was the invincible determination of most leaders of anti-nuclear agitation in the West to ignore inconvenient developments on the international or domestic stage. On 10 December 1979, *The Guardian* had published a letter drafted by Gordon Schaffer, a holder of the Lenin Peace Prize and Vice-President of the British arm of the Soviet-controlled propaganda front, the World Peace Council (WPC). It was headlined "ACT NOW ON SOVIET INITIATIVE TO QUELL THE ARMS RACE" and the letter stated that its signatories "welcome the Soviet decision to withdraw 20,000 troops, 1,000 tanks and some other military material from the territory of the German Democratic Republic as a practical step which could greatly improve the prospects of success"; it demanded that the West should use the Soviet proposals "as the basis for genuine progress towards disarmament." As well as its author, this letter was signed by Lord (Gerald) Gardiner, Lord (Donald) Soper, Lord (Hugh) Scanlon, half-a-dozen Leftist Labour MPs or MEPs, including the future deputy-leader of the Labour Group in the European Parliament, two bishops, several prominent trade-unionists, and Bruce Kent, the future General Secretary of CND. Just over a fortnight later, Soviet troops and tanks—possibly including some of those very forces so considerately withdrawn from East Germany—were engaged in the subjugation of Afghanistan. Leaving aside those pro-Soviet signatories of the *Guardian* letter who actively approved of the invasion, there was not the least evidence of contrition from the remainder that their assessment of Soviet intentions had been so grotesquely inaccurate. That none should have been expected is what I wish now to explain.

WESTERN DEMOCRATIC POLITICIANS are always under the temptation to gravitate towards what they conceive to be the "Centre" of the spectrum of views on any contentious issue. Thus, Conservatives often tend to assume that voters to their Right will have to back them anyway, so the best policy is to try to wean away as many of their opponents' supporters as they can by shifting as far as possible in their direction. This is to overlook the need to motivate and rally the people already inclined towards one's own position, rather than to demoralise them by making concessions to the contrary view. More significantly, in the nuclear arena it assumes some sort of steady gradation from "multilateralism" to "unilateralism" and the existence in between of a sizeable pool of floating voters in which to fish for electoral support.

To those of us who were critical of CND, it soon became apparent that this is a misconception. There are two fundamentally incompatible ways of viewing the workings of international politics. One is to regard the actors on the international stage as primarily motivated by *groundless mutual suspicion*. If one side can convince another of its sincerity so as to break this vicious circle, the argument runs, then *mutual fear* will subside and the danger of war will recede. The opposing view is that it is precisely such fear of the consequences which is the essential safety-device to *deter* ideologically adventurist states from aggressive behaviour. These two views respectively underpin the division between the unilateralist and multilateralist camps. They are psychologically poles apart, and there is little scope for halfway-houses between them.

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One famous inter-War Chairman of the League of Nations Disarmament Commission articulated this distinction, with hindsight, in 1973:

> "The trouble with disarmament [noted Salvador de Madariaga] was (and still is) that the problem of war is tackled upside down and at the wrong end. . . . Nations don't distrust each other because they are armed; they are armed because the distrust each other. And therefore to want disarmament before a minimum of common agreement on fundamentals is as absurd as to want people to go undressed in winter."

Between 1980 and 1982, many opponents of Unilateralism found themselves unwarily accepting false positions into which they had let themselves be manoeuvred by the vocabulary of the disarmament lobby. They failed robustly to declare that general disarmament in a divided world was a dangerous chimera, whatever the limited utility of "balanced arms reductions." They failed clearly to perceive Unilateralism as an article of faith which can only be disproved by suffering attack after disarming, rather than by reasoned argument (since if deterrence succeeds in averting war it can always be claimed that no conflict would have occurred anyway). Above all, the politicians among them failed to comprehend that massive annual demonstrations and skilfully orchestrated media-coverage did not mean that the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was the activist tip of an electoral iceberg which could overwhelm any party which strongly opposed it.

In helping to dispel these illusions, it may be that the "Falklands factor" helped Mrs Thatcher to victory in a more indirect way than has generally been supposed. After the fall of the Galtieri régime in Argentina, declassified Intelligence assessments showed that a British military response had been deemed to be highly unlikely. Possibly the Argentinians too had overestimated the influence and representativeness of the "Peace" movement in Britain. Certainly there was a striking congruence between the anti-nuclear agitation and the anti-Falklands Task Force campaign. CND, for example, seconded one of its full-time employees—Ron McIlroy (who subsequently joined the Communist Party)—to work for the so-called "*Ad Hoc* Committee for Peace in the Falklands."

Throughout the crisis it was always apparent that public opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of the despatch of the British Task Force, while CND was overwhelmingly against it. Theoretically, one can postulate a large number of nuclear unilateralists who nevertheless rejected CND's opposition to the Falklands campaign; but, in reality, this combination of views was seldom if ever to be found. When at the height of the Falklands crisis the CND annual anti-nuclear rally in Hyde Park achieved a turnout comparable with those of previous years, the lesson was plain: most of the people who had been successfully intimidating public opinion and the Government with their strident campaigning for nuclear disarmament actually belonged to the same minority sectors of society opposed to the manifestly popular Falklands campaign.

This realisation may well have been crucial in the Cabinet's decision to attack the disarmament lobby uncompromisingly, rather than continuing to try to appease its proponents. Vigorous initiatives, timed to coincide with unilateralist media stunts, replaced the previous inclination to adopt a low profile in the run-up to the General Election. Predictably, the Government received its reward at the hands of an electorate greatly relieved at being given a lead on the need for deterrence and strong defences. Just as predictably, the proof by careful political monitoring that CND was controlled by individuals of almost exclusively Left-wing credentials was met with outraged protests about "smear" tactics—in the best traditions of "Reverse McCarthyism" (which holds that no matter how openly committed someone is to the causes of Marxist-Leninism, Trotskyism, or the Soviet Union, he must never be described as a Communist).

Most predictable of all—a lesson yet to be fully appreciated in Belgium and the Netherlands—was the fact that, with the arrival on schedule of Cruise missiles at Greenham Common in November 1983, the unilateralist lobby began losing momentum with every month that passed without the outbreak of the much-predicted "holocaust", its devastating "Day After", and the onset of a "nuclear winter."

The lessons of the December 1979 "twin-track" decision and its aftermath are, therefore, that moves to strengthen NATO defences will always cause an outcry from certain sections of Western opinion; that such opposition cannot be bought off, but must be confronted and countered; and that democratic governments which have the courage of their convictions and are willing to put the overall defence issues squarely to their own peoples will not suffer electorally as a result.

"Nam-myoho-renge-kyo"

London

STANDING *amid a cardboard Holocaust, Major Richard Causten comes full circle. Once a career soldier employed in the War Office to prepare exercises for nuclear conflict, he is devoting the second half of his life to undoing the consequences of the first. In this, the Left's "Year of Peace", Causten is organising a World Exposition in London.*

He became a follower of the precepts of Nichiren Daishonin, the offspring of a 13th-century fishing family whose coming was foretold by Buddha himself.

In 1253 Daishonin rejected all existing Buddhist sects and proclaimed the correct practice of Buddhism for the modern age. It involved chanting the words "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo", the title of Buddha's highest teaching, the "Lotus Sutra." Repeat this often enough, apparently, and you will merge with the Supreme Law of Life.

Lectures will be given in Kensington Library by Causten himself and also by Professor Brian Wilson, from All Souls College, Oxford, Dr John Humphrey from the "Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons" and, perhaps surprisingly, Brigadier Michael Harbottle, who will represent an outfit called "Generals for Peace and Disarmament."

"Nuclear war has made a lot of generals think," Causten explained, "and they are getting together to do something about it."

The centre-piece of the exposition will be a scale model of post-Holocaust London.

SUNDAY TIMES

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The Kremlin & the Peace Fighters

New Movements v. Old Party Lines—By ELIZABETH TEAGUE

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, there was bitter disappointment in Moscow at the failure of the West European peace movement to prevent initial installation of new medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe. This disappointment has led the Soviet leaders to review their policy not only on the Peace Movement, but on all the "new social movements" active in the West today. By and large, they evidently like what they see.

Yuri Andropov, then general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), called in June 1983 for a re-evaluation of the nature of the peace movement and of the role the world's Communist parties should be playing in it. "The threat of nuclear war hanging over the world", Andropov said, "prompts us to make a fresh assessment of the basic purpose of the activity of the whole Communist movement" (*Pravda*, 16 June 1983).

Andropov's call was answered in August when an editorial in the CPSU's most authoritative journal, *Kommunist*, laid down the Party line. Claiming that the balance of world forces had reached a "new stage", *Kommunist* stated that:

> "The key antagonism of the present epoch—that is, the antagonism between socialism and imperialism—has today taken on a new and very important form, and is turning into a global struggle between the forces of imperialism, on the one hand, and the interests of all mankind, on the other. . . . It is a question of saving life on our planet."

If the struggle against Nuclear War and for Peace had become the key struggle—as *Kommunist* declared—then it followed that this would be the main battleground on which the "class struggle" was now to be waged. Accordingly, the struggle for Peace could be transformed into the struggle for Socialism. This is reminiscent of the way Lenin and the Bolsheviks called upon the soldiers of the First World War to "turn the imperialist war into a civil and revolutionary war"—and to direct their bayonets not against other soldiers (their "class brothers") but against their capitalist masters instead.

It is a throw-back, too, to the dictum of Georgii Dimitrov, (once general-secretary of the Comintern) that "the struggle for peace is a struggle for socialism throughout the world."[1] Fifty years ago, at the Comintern's Seventh Congress in 1935, Dimitrov proclaimed the policy of the "Popular Front", calling upon Communist parties to promote "united action" against fascism and militarism by all sections of the working class, regardless of party or organisational affiliation. Now Moscow is once again urging Communist parties throughout the Western world to cooperate in "popular fronts" with peace groups of every political, religious, and ideological persuasion.

Soviet leaders appear well aware that today's Western democracies are not quite "ripe for revolution", and that there is in the foreseeable future no possibility that a Communist party will come to power in any major Western country. At the same time, they realise that there is among the populations of Western Europe a widespread longing not for Revolution, but for the preservation of Peace, and that it is this yearning that has found expression in the massive anti-nuclear demonstrations of the past few years.

The majority of the members of West Europe's "peace movements" are not particularly pro-Soviet; some of them are not even socialist; many are broadly apolitical. It is surely this that makes them so interesting in Moscow's eyes. Soviet commentators point out that, while the Anti-War demonstrators of the 1950s and 1960s tended to be "progressive-minded men and women . . . most of whom were under the influence of Leftist parties and democratic organisations", in the 1980s the Peace Movement has been joined by people from literally all walks of life, "many of whom belong to no political party."[2]

Soviet commentaries express particular satisfaction at the Peace Movement's tendency to attract members from an ever wider cross-section of society. In this way, whole groups of Western society not normally accessible to such propaganda are being opened up to Soviet and Communist party influence.

Two social categories are of particular interest from the Soviet point of view.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, the Peace Movement is attracting support from "strata of society that have tended until now to be politically passive."[3] The involvement of religious

[1] Quoted in J. A. Emerson Vermaat, "Moscow Fronts and the European Peace Movement", *Problems of Communism* (November-December 1982), pp. 43-56.

[2] E. P. Blinova, "Women in the Anti-War Movement in the 1980s", *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (No 4, July-August 1984), pp. 55-60.

[3] N. V. Zagladin, "Nations of the West: Problems in the Development of the Workers' Movement", *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (No 2, March-April 1984), pp. 44-56.

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believers—"even such seemingly conservative forces as American Catholics"[4]—and the "previously unprecedented participation of women"[5] are considered especially gratifying.

Secondly, the Soviet media express almost incredulous delight at the Peace Movement's attraction for the middle classes—"even some retired army generals and people of bourgeois origin"[6]—seen as having "a decisive influence on the formation of public opinion."

The hope of the Soviet leaders is that this wide cross-section of Western public opinion will, through participation in the Anti-War movement, eventually become sufficiently radicalised and alienated from their elected governments as to become, if not "revolutionary" or "anti-capitalist", then at least neutralist and anti-American. For example, *Kommunist* has expressed its approval of the fact that

> "the participation of hundreds of thousands of young men and women in anti-war demonstrations, often involving direct clashes with police and army detachments, provides an invaluable practical school of political education for today's younger generation. This is very promising 'work done in anticipation' of the near future."

A suggestion that the process of radicalisation has already begun is found in a recent article by a leading member of the "Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp":

> "Few women pass through the camp without deciding that Cruise missiles are just one particular and frightening manifestation of our complete lack of self-determination. So that it seems completely natural to move from here to campaigns against Violence against Women; support for Nicaragua, Namibia, or miners' picket lines. . . ."[7]

Moscow's long-term interest in the West's Peace Movement can be summed up in the following (again from *Kommunist*):

> "The struggle for peace . . . has a tendency to develop into a struggle with a broader social content. The protest against nuclear war may, in certain conditions, also turn against the society that begets wars."

Soviet leaders are aware, of course, that this is not a short-term project; but they appear to be able to take an enviably long-term view of political trends and processes. Consider Boris Ponomarev (he celebrated his 80th birthday in January of this year). For some 30 years now, Ponomarev has headed the CPSU's "International Department", responsible for the Party's relations both with the world's non-ruling Communist parties and with "unofficial organisations" (such as the Peace Movement). Back in the late 1930s Ponomarev was a young Comintern functionary, working as Dimitrov's aide; today he is living proof of the continuity of 50 years of Soviet foreign policy.

OVER THE PAST YEAR the Soviet press has repeatedly expressed confidence that, despite the failure of the campaign to stop initial missile deployment, the Western Peace Movement is far from defeated. *Kommunist* cites "waves" of popular protest (in the early 1950s, in the 1960s, and again at the end of the 1970s and in the early 1980s) to show that the Anti-War movement has always been marked by "periodic ebbs and flows." Each wave has tended to be larger than its predecessor, and more broadly based in its social composition. The present period, *Kommunist* goes on, is a "transitional phase." Having lost the campaign against Cruise and *Pershing*, the Peace Movement lacks a specific rallying-cry. It is entering "a new stage of development" and gradually transforming itself into a permanent political factor that will be able to exert "effective influence" over government decisions.

Vadim Zagladin—an influential Soviet official who holds the post of Ponomarev's first deputy at the head of the "International Department"—has expressed similar satisfaction that "the Anti-War movement is assuming new forms. It is becoming more radical, more aware, more purposeful." This is, Zagladin declares, a sign of "a political crisis" in Western society that is "only just beginning."[8]

The close attention Soviet leaders have been paying to the Peace Movement has led them also to examine the other "new social movements" active in the West. This term describes an almost infinite variety of protest groups, of which the Peace Movement is the largest and most vociferous. They include, for example, the Women's movement, Environment organisations, Gay Rights and Black Power as well as nationalist and ethnic movements, and a whole host of Citizens' Initiative groups operating at grass-roots level.

Vadim Zagladin's son Nikita, himself an academic specialist on the world Communist movement, claims that these "new forms of struggle" have proliferated in the 1980s because "traditional forms of struggle and organisation have begun to lose their effectiveness." Implicitly criticising the Western Communist parties, Zagladin writes that "reactionary forces are on the advance in many capitalist nations" but are meeting "inadequate resistance" because the working class is sunk in "hopelessness and apathy."

Yuri Krasin and Boris Leibzon, two of the USSR's most senior specialists on the world Communist movement, also describe the social protest movements as a "new phenomenon." A growing number of people in the West are, they write, "becoming disillusioned with the supposed merits and advantages of the bourgeois way of life. Diverse as these groups are, they share a common characteristic. They are all founded on "distrust of the state" and are protesting against "the prevailing order." Nikita Zagladin similarly notes that, while such groups "do not generally threaten the bases of the

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[4] O. N. Melikyan, "A Crucial Choice: The Anti-War Movement and Roads to Security", *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (No 6, November-December 1983), pp. 11-23.

[5] V. Orel, "The Anti-War Movement: Achievements and Prospects", *Kommunist* (No 12, August 1984), pp. 87-98.

[6] Yu. Krasin and B. Leibzon, "Communists and the New Social Protest Movements", *Kommunist* (No 5, March 1984), pp. 105-115.

[7] Lynne Jones, "Changing Ideas of Authority", *New Statesman* (30 November 1984), pp. 8-9.

[8] Interviewed on Soviet television, 24 December 1983.

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capitalist system", they do "pose a serious challenge to certain of the interests of monopoly capitalism." Zagladin concludes that the "new social movements" mark a "transitional state" midway between support for capitalism and outright struggle for socialism. Krasin and Leibzon predict, moreover, that these pockets of disaffected citizens are "heralds of new antagonistic [that is, class] conflicts" and will eventually prove "conscious participants in the anti-monopoly struggle."

A BARRAGE OF APPEALS has accordingly issued from Moscow, calling on the world's non-ruling Communist parties to step up their cooperation with the "new social movements" in general and with the Peace Movement in particular. *Kommunist* has declared the movements to be "the new allies of the working class" and that the "struggle to prevent nuclear war" is an "absolute imperative" for Communists. Vadim Zagladin emphasised this point in an article urging Western Communist Parties to make support for the peace movement their "*first priority*", relegating to "second place . . . the struggle against the consequences of the economic recession and against unemployment."[9]

There are indications, however, that Moscow's directive has met with opposition among some Western Communist parties. Nikita Zagladin has acknowledged the existence of

> "significant differences between the fraternal parties in their assessment of the anti-capitalist potential of the new social movements, and of the prospects for entering into alliances with them."

Kommunist has had sharp criticism for "certain" non-ruling parties, complaining that "a large proportion of the workers and their organisations has not been drawn into the Anti-War movement." By praising the efforts of the French and West German Communist Parties—and omitting to mention the parties in the majority of the countries receiving Cruise and *Pershing* (Britain, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands)—*Kommunist* made quite clear at whom its rebuke was aimed. The workers must be convinced (*Kommunist* went on) of the existence of a causal link between increased defence spending and rising levels of unemployment in the Western nations.[10]

It is at times of high unemployment, however, that it is likely to be hardest to persuade industrial workers that reductions in defence expenditure and arms production will create more, rather than fewer, jobs. The opinions of workers at the Vickers shipyard in Barrow-in-Furness, at which submarines are to be built to carry Britain's new *Trident* nuclear missiles, were canvassed by *Sanity*, the journal of Britain's "Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament." The journal found that shipyard workers felt they were faced with a straight choice between support for disarmament and their own job security.

> "If, for most of us [*Sanity* concluded], *Trident* is an important moral issue, in Barrow the issue is jobs. . . . Vickers workers feel strongly that they should not be made scapegoats for other people's consciences."[11]

Given that the defence industry is one of the major employers of labour in Western Europe, it is not hard to see why Moscow is complaining about "apolitical attitudes", "social blinkeredness" and the "non-involvement" of "comparatively large numbers of workers" in the Western Peace Movement. Clearly, too, some Western Communists found cooperation with the new social movements highly distasteful. "It is no secret", *Kommunist* remarked,

> "that at first certain comrades were unable to grasp the nature of the Anti-War movements . . . were not always able to overcome their prejudices against pacifist and ecological organisations with their inconsistent and contradictory arguments, and did not perceive the

The Fire-Raisers

THREE PEACE CAMPAIGNERS *were yesterday gaoled for starting a fire at what they believed to be part of the Fylingdales nuclear early warning centre.*

The former military radio mast was in fact an important communications link for the civil emergency services across two counties.

The night attack on the installation at Garrowby Hill, near Pocklington, on the border of North Yorkshire and Humberside succeeded in knocking out eight radio channels used by fire and police forces and caused over £228,000 worth of damage.

The secretary of the Pocklington branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Roger Westmoreland, a 37-year-old forester, was gaoled for three years after being found guilty of arson.

Fred Gott, 34, a labourer, who admitted the offence, was sentenced to two years. Steven Patrick Fogg of Manchester, described as "politically naive and easily led", received 12 months, eight of them suspended, for his part in the fire.

York Crown Court heard that the three had gone to the mast after a CND meeting. They cut through a security fence, poured petrol and diesel oil into the building after smashing a window, and then set light to it.

THE GUARDIAN

PAY AS YOU BURN: **The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which readily accepted a cheque for £745 from Conservative Central Office for damage to its mock "Trident" submarine at the Tory conference, had three members jailed on Monday for setting fire to a radio mast in Yorkshire.**

Can the Government now look forward to a £228,000 cheque from CND for damage incurred?

THE TIMES

NOT THEIR STYLE: *An instant response from CND to my query yesterday about whether it will pay for damage caused to a Yorkshire radio mast by arson. No, it will not send the government a £228,000 cheque. It disowns the culprits. "Their action was rash and ill-considered. I would have condemned it without hesitation", said Bruce Kent, the general secretary.*

THE TIMES

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[9] V. Zagladin, "Communists on the Cutting Edge of the Struggle", *Agitator* (No 17, September 1984), pp. 38-41.

[10] *Kommunist*, No 12, August 1983, pp. 19-29.

[11] "Barrow, *Trident* and the Alternative", *Sanity* (January 1984), pp. 17-21; "Barrow Prepares for *Trident*", *Sanity* (October 1984), pp. 16-29.

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members of these movements as their allies in the struggle for peace.[12]

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko himself had to remind the non-ruling Communist parties of their duty, quoting the words of Lenin to warn that Communists who underestimated the usefulness of the Peace Movement were making a big mistake:

> "The question that must always be asked is: 'Who stands to profit?' In politics it is not so important to know *who* is championing certain opinions. What is important is to know *who stands to profit* from those opinions."[13]

EVEN SOVIET COMMENTATORS find it hard to conceal their impatience and irritation at the "unusual" and "odd" diversity of the views espoused by the new movements, which *Kommunist* has described as ranging from "anarchist", "pseudo-Marxist" and "left-wing extremist" to "reformist", "religious" and "anti-Communist." The journal deplored the "clearly anti-scientific nature" of some feminist viewpoints, but reserved its greatest scorn for West Germany's pacifist and environmentalist "Green Party", whom it labelled "Luddites" because of their "total opposition to all technological progress."[14]

While requiring Western Communists to work closely with the "new movements", therefore, Moscow warns them to beware lest, "through contacts with non-proletarian strata, views alien to scientific socialism should penetrate their ranks. . . ." Once in power, it is hinted, Communist parties would sing a different song. *Kommunist* notes, for example, that Communists in power "naturally cannot tolerate pacifist views, such as the abolition of military service, which would jeopardise the defence capability and security [of the socialist bloc]." Soviet commentators admit in moments of candour that their interest in the Western Peace Movement springs from its potential ability to weaken the West not only socially, but also militarily. Thus, an editorial in the Soviet philosophy journal *Voprosy filosofii*, states that the only true safeguard against war is "a realignment of inter-state relations" based on

> "real shifts in the international balance of power involving a strengthening of socialism's position *in the military as well as in other spheres*, and on increased solidarity between socialist and democratic movements against their common enemy . . . imperialism."[15]

THE ANALYSIS here presented suggests that the policy Moscow has been urging upon the non-ruling Communist parties represents a revival of the Comintern's famous "Popular Front" strategy. How this works—or fails to work—in present conditions can be seen from the case of the British Communist Party (CPGB). The CPGB is today split into three bitterly hostile factions. What divides them is, as much as anything, disagreement over what attitude the Party should adopt toward the "new social movements."[16]

1. The CPGB's "Eurocommunist" wing argues that these movements represent conflicts in modern society that cut across class barriers. They are not reducible to classic Marxist categories of class, and are therefore not resolvable merely by economic means. The examples most frequently given are the Women's and Peace movements, but there are many more. The "Eurocommunists" call on the Party to widen its popular appeal by identifying itself not only with the industrial working-class, but also with the "new social movements." Such a strategy goes beyond that of the Popular Front for it commits the Party not merely to tactical alliances with other social forces, but to an extension of its own social base that would (the "Eurocommunists" claim) result in the Party's own transformation.

2. Not a few Party-liners question both the sincerity and the feasibility of the "Eurocommunist" strategy. Some of the fiercest attacks upon it have come from Moscow and from within the CPGB's own ranks. On the Party's "hard Left" is a fundamentalist faction whose members "deride 'bourgeois feminism' and other social movements" and urge the Party to have no truck with such non-class (and, therefore non-Marxist) notions.

3. Another faction within the CPGB has crystallised around the *Morning Star* newspaper (formerly the *Daily Worker*), by whose supporters (as the "Eurocommunists" charge), "the role of social forces is recognised but minimised. Their character is debased." Thus, the *Morning Star* is held to have given only grudging coverage to issues such as the Women's Movement, the Environment and the Peace Movement, maintaining that such problems are best understood not as autonomous conflicts but as facets of the overarching "struggle against the capitalist monopolies."

The *Morning Star*'s approach agrees most closely with Moscow's, according to which imperialism is not only the sole source of the threat of war but also the root cause of all social evils in Western society. The CPGB's "Eurocommunist" wing has, meanwhile, incurred Moscow's wrath by falling into

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[12] *Kommunist* (No 12), August 1983, pp. 19-29.

[13] A. Gromyko, "V. I. Lenin and the Foreign Policy of the Soviet State", *Kommunist* (No 6, April 1983), pp. 11-23 (emphasis in original).

A hint of further opposition to Moscow's line came at a conference of the international Communist journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* held at the end of 1984. According to one (unconfirmed) report, disagreement broke out between participants over the focus of the journal's future work. While the CPSU insisted that this should be "the danger of nuclear war", Western Communist parties are said to have argued that this topic was played out and that "the struggle against unemployment" was for them of greater importance. . . . (*Agence France Presse*, 9 December 1984).

[14] Western Environmental groups are also criticised for their opposition to nuclear power and their failure to understand that, in the Socialist Bloc, nuclear energy is being put to beneficial use and is therefore progressive; and that it is only under capitalism that it is used irresponsibly and should be opposed. A. K. Zhiritsky, "The Western Intelligentsia in the Struggle for Peace", *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (Jan.-Feb. 1984), pp. 111-123.

[15] "The Struggle for Peace and Social Progress", *Voprosy filosofii* (No 1, January 1984), pp. 11-25 (emphasis added).

[16] Jon Bloomfield, "Crossed Lines: Communists in Search of an Identity", *Marxism Today* (April 1984), pp. 25-29.

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the heresy espoused by large sections of Britain's peace movement, that is, that both East and West bear at least some responsibility for the arms race and for the present state of international tension.

Of course, it would be naive to expect Soviet leaders to seek to advance the interests of any nation rather than their own, and clearly Moscow perceives its own security as best enhanced by the promotion of instability among Western nations. The recent spate of terrorist attacks in NATO countries is therefore disturbing not only because it seems to mark the birth of a new, coordinated "Euroterrorism" but also because it has been accompanied by a change in tactics. Recent terrorist attacks seem no longer to be aimed at a vague and general destabilisation of democratic governments, but to be specifically focused against NATO targets. This has caused speculation that the terrorist revival is being fuelled by the disillusion and frustration felt by extremist elements within the West European peace movement after the failure of the campaign to prevent Euromissile deployment. There is no known evidence to suggest Soviet involvement in the new phenomenon but, as Lenin would have been the first to ask, "Who stands to profit?"

AUTHORS

Norman Podhoretz, editor of *Commentary* magazine in New York, is the author of *Doings and Undoings, Making It*, a political memoir, *Breaking Ranks* (Weidenfeld, 1980), and *Why We Were in Vietnam*.

John Loveday's most recent volume of poems is *From the Old Foundry* (Mandeville Press, 1983).

Michael Henry's first collection of poems, *Lenten Visitor*, will be published in September by KQBX Press.

Edward Pearce is a leader writer and Parliamentary sketch writer on the *Daily Telegraph* in London. His book *The Senate of Lilliput*, published by Faber in 1983, is to be followed this year by a sequel, *Hummingbirds and Hyenas*.

François Fejtö, Paris correspondent for *Il Giornale Nuovo*, is the author of *The French Communist Party* (M.I.T. Press, 1967) and *History of the People's Democracies* (Penguin ed., 1974).

David Lodge, Professor of Modern English Literature at the University of Birmingham, is the author of *The Language of Fiction* (n.e. Routledge, 1984), *Working with Structuralism* (1981), and *The Modes of Modern Writing* (1977). His latest novel, *Small World*, was published in 1984 by Secker & Warburg, who this spring brought out a revised version of his early novel, *Out of the Shelter*.

Val Warner has edited the *Collected Poems and Prose* of Charlotte Mew (Virago, 1982).

Bernard Bergonzi, Professor of English at the University of Warwick, is the author, among other works, of *Reading the Thirties* (1978), *The Situation of the Novel* (1979), and *Heroes' Twilight* (1980), all published by Macmillan Press. His novel *The Roman Persuasion* was published in 1981 by Weidenfeld.

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James Lasdun works in London as a publisher's reader. A collection of his short stories, *The Silver Age*, will be published this summer by Jonathan Cape.

John Mole's latest volume of poems, *In and Out of the Apple*, was published in 1984 by Secker & Warburg, who in 1981 brought out his earlier collection, *Feeding the Lake*.

Richard Usborne's books include *Clubland Heroes* (n.e. Hutchinson, 1983), *Wodehouse at Work* (rev. ed. Barrie & Jenkins, 1977), and *A Wodehouse Companion* (Elm Tree Books, 1981). He is the editor of *Wodehouse Nuggets* (Hutchinson, 1983) and *Vintage Wodehouse* (Barrie & Jenkins, 1977), and has adapted Wodehouse novels for BBC radio serials.

Jessica Gwynne is a painter and stage-designer.

Julian Lewis is a director of the pro-defence campaigning group, the Coalition for Peace Through Security. He took his doctorate in Strategic Studies at Oxford in 1981, and his study of British strategic planning for post-War defence, *Changing Direction*, will be published in the autumn by the Sherwood Press.

Elizabeth Teague is a political analyst for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich.

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LETTERS

Revel's "Paradox"

THERE IS NOTHING bizarre about the terrorism statistic noted by Jean-François Revel in the May ENCOUNTER. ("For the last fifteen years some *two-thirds* of the world's recorded acts of terrorism have been perpetrated in Western Europe.") If he had taken the United States into account, his figure for the Western world would have been even higher.

Our greater Western share of such violence is normal rather than bizarre. As Rebecca West said of the traitor, the terrorist is a sport (mutant) from a necessary type—necessary, that is to say, for us. He is the pathological version of the lone dissenter, the nonconformist, the heretic whom we not only tolerate but encourage as a vital minority-opposition element in democratic politics and society. The sort of police powers and action needed to eliminate the pathological aberrations would almost certainly result in the Eastern European version of a police state, making our own political system into a dismal charade.

The looser political parameters west of the Iron Curtain are not the only encouragement for the terrorist. The ideological killer finds a great deal of hiding space in the metaphysical fog of political theorising which characterises much in Western academic life. (It gives, for instance, much American aid and comfort to the Provisional IRA.) He may also derive sustenance from the Western belief in "progress" and "change", which—compared to Eastern dogmas on the subject—is more or less open-ended. One remembers Tocqueville's observation that revolt springs more from hope than from harsh oppression. This may well be true of the criminal type of revolt we call terrorism, in a society where a public hope for something "new" or "different" is far more acceptable to the authorities than it is under Eastern régimes.

There is, of course, the additional and obvious point that the Marxist-Leninist terrorists may see less to alter east of the Iron Curtain than west of it. Their goal is not, as they claim, to "eliminate oppression" but to impose a particular form of it, using a certain sort of libertarian rhetoric as a tool to that end.

Thus M. Revel's "paradox" is more apparent than real. What does seem a cruel irony is that it may be impossible to wipe out terrorism without destroying the present scope of legitimate dissent. What may help is a sense of decent proportion among those who find it radically *chic* or exciting to support the terrorist, either with shelter or with excuses. Unfortunately there seems little prospect of such a sense on either side of the Atlantic.

HERB GREER

Manchester

A Keddle of Fish

YOU HAVE ERRED in your April "Life and Letters" by believing what you read in the newspapers. Surely ENCOUNTER is above such a thing!

I refer to the *Daily Mail* story about a kettle of fish. This is popular mythology, and nothing more. The cooking pot was, and is, a keddle, and hence the expression, still in quite common use, is "a keddle of fish."

But you do publish a splendid magazine, for which my thanks.

T. WHEELDON

Tunbridge Wells
Kent

"Churchill's Last Gambit"

IT IS difficult to see the necessity "to revise a number of . . . previously accepted judgments" on the basis of the article of Dr Anthony Glees, "Churchill's Last Gambit" (ENCOUNTER, April). The facts about the situation in 1953 and 1954 are well known. It is no secret that Adenauer gave priority to the integration of the Federal Republic of Germany into Western Europe over (anyhow futile) attempts to obtain German re-unification first. Churchill's "last gambit" was not any plan "to sacrifice" in negotiations with Moscow "a West Germany led by Dr Konrad Adenauer for a new, reunified Germany led by someone else" (as if it could have been fixed beforehand who should lead such a reunified Germany!) but the plan for a Summit Conference, developed in his House of Commons speech on 11 May 1953. His (and not only his) mistake was the belief that "with the death of Stalin, the new Soviet leadership has the opportunity to make its own future and to free itself from the past"—while Malenkov, whose emergence was hailed in the West with the same enthusiasm as now the emergence of Gorbachev, had neither the will and the vision nor the strength to break with the past.

Whether "there were good arguments in favour of reunification—and good arguments against it"—is irrelevant, as the reunification of Germany by merging the Bonn Federal Republic with the Eastern *DDR* was at no time after 1945 a possibility to be taken seriously. As long as the Soviet Union pretended to be in favour of German unity (namely on her terms, unacceptable to the West), the West had no choice but to behave as if it were the dearest wish of Great Britain, the USA and France to achieve for the German people unity in freedom. Churchill was by no means "the person who in 1953 most wanted to see a reunified Germany." All that Churchill did in that respect was an attempt (in his internal memorandum of July 1953) to explain that German reunification in freedom would not be a danger to the West.

J. W. BRUEGEL

London

I REGRET that Mr Bruegel finds nothing new in my article "Churchill's Last Gambit" which was based on the Public Records released in 1984 and 1985, previously classified as "secret" or "top secret." Unlike Mr Bruegel, I do not possess the gift of telepathy, and Churchill's views in 1953 (which to the best of my knowledge have hitherto escaped scholarly attention) were certainly new to me.

Mr Bruegel misses the essential point of my article, which was that in his memorandum Churchill argued that a reunified Germany might be achieved by doing a deal with the new Soviet leadership. Although he accepted that such a Germany might nominally have to be neutral in order to gain Soviet support, Churchill did not believe that in reality it would remain neutral, even if such a Germany were no longer led by Dr Adenauer. This had nothing to do with "fixing" the question of the leadership of Germany (as Mr Bruegel seems to think), but with the assumption that Dr Adenauer's support lay in the West and would therefore be eclipsed by the *SPD* if elections were held in the whole of Germany.

Furthermore, in arguing in favour of a reunified Germany, Churchill was turning his back on the policy he had so consistently supported during World War II, namely that a united German nation was a threat to the peace of the world and that German unity would have to be destroyed once Hitler was defeated.

What I tried to suggest was that, in 1953 and 1954, contrary to common belief (if not to Mr Bruegel's), Dr Adenauer did everything he could to prevent the West and the USSR from concluding a deal of this nature. He undoubtedly had good reasons for doing this: but, if Churchill was correct, Adenauer was wrong. For Adenauer believed that a "reunified Germany" and a Germany which looked to the

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Life & Letters Today

London

BULL BY THE HORNS: *Nearly a quarter of a century after Ernest Hemingway blew his brains out, his last unpublished book is about to appear in America.*

Entitled "The Dangerous Summer", it is about the two matadors, Miguel Dominguin and his brother-in-law, Antonio Ordonez, who dominated the Spanish bullfighting scene in the late 1950s. For all his masculine bravura, "Papa" Hemingway was a sensitive soul when it came to criticism.

So perhaps it is just as well that the late Kenneth Tynan is not around to pass judgement on this book. For Tynan was also an aficionado of the bullring, as well as a close friend of both matadors.

In 1960, a year before his suicide, Hemingway ran into Tynan in Southern Spain and asked what he thought of his two heroes.

Tynan's reply rendered the old bore speechless: "Reasonably intelligent cowhands, doing a difficult job."

THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

Tokyo

BANZAI!: **In Japan recently, a newspaper ad offered a high starting salary, $18,000, to anyone who could write technical manuals in simple English. A knowledge of informal phrases is especially valuable. Sony Corporation, looking to fill a slot in its worldwide network, placed this ad:**

"*Wanted: Japanese Who Can Swear in English.*"

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

London

NAME DROPPERS: *Down Lambeth way, they have a "Rhodesia Road." Been there for almost a century, it has. Now, as a contribution to "Anti-Racist Year", Left-wing zealots on Lambeth Council want to abolish "Rhodesia Road" and rename it "Zimbabwe Road."*

Just one small snag: Every householder in the road wants the name to stay as it is. Furthermore, this little community of nine freehold homes is as multi-racial as any in the land. There's a Jamaican nurse; an Italian carpenter; a Polish widow; an Irish builder; a Russian Jew; oh, and there may even be a Cockney or two as well.

But the tin-pot dictators can't see further than their own slogans. They prate of "community projects." They can't recognise a real flesh-and-blood community when they drive their bureaucratic bulldozer straight at it.

It's a good job this humourless and overbearing lot do not have a municipal power base down at Salisbury in the West Country . . . or the edict might go out and one of our most lovely and ancient spires would reach heavenwards from "Harare" Cathedral!

DAILY MAIL

Moscow

DOOM: **The delegation of British writers in Moscow is well aware of the propaganda traps traditionally set by its hosts, the elite Soviet Union of Writers.**

The six-strong party, which includes Francis King, Melvyn Bragg, Margaret Drabble and her husband Michael Holroyd, is sponsored by the sensible, Government-financed Great Britain-U.S.S.R. Association, which wants friendship with Russia but not at any price.

In a letter to London confirming the agenda, the Russians said this first literary Round Table is important and is "*doomed to success.*"

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Washington, D.C.

GOOFS & GAFFES: **In their rush to English, foreigners often mangle the language—just as Americans and Britons stumble over the idioms or pronunciations of other tongues. In Shanghai recently, tourists were told by their Chinese guide that population pressure was so great that "*the city is pouring out to the skirts.*" In Tokyo, one can see storefront signs advertising "*Hair Saloon*" or listen to a nightclub singer croon an otherwise perfect "*Moon Liver.*"**

In Argentina, restaurants sometimes translate scrambled eggs as "*revolting eggs*" from the Spanish *huevos revueltos*. Government tourist brochures are written by public "*traducers*", a coinage from the Spanish word *traducción*, meaning translation.

An idiomatic goof sometimes leads to a diplomatic gaffe. A middle-echelon Soviet envoy once raised his glass after delivering some elegant words at a Washington dinner party. He intended to say, "*Bottoms up.*" But it came out, "*Up Your Bottoms.*"

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

London

PUNDITRY: *To have had a teacher like Mr John Davis when we were learning to spell! "What do reindeer say before they tell you a joke?" asks Mr Davis to illustrate the use of* **ei** *(The answer, of course, is "This'll sleigh you.")*

Children are naturally disinclined to learn, says ex-teacher (English and Art) Mr Davis. "But if you make it entertaining half the battle is done. I would look at the average dull sentence and think, 'If it bores me, what does it do to the children?'"

The result is "Handling Spelling" (Hutchinson Educational), a compilation of mnemonics, visuals, sparky metaphors and examples of common spelling traps.

The audience he aims at is between 11 and 16, with the more sophisticated punning examples coming nearer the end, as in "I'd give my right hand to be able to write ambidextrously" to illustrate the **long i**. *Or my favourite, for the* **silent h**.

"Why do demons and ghouls get along so well?" "Because demons are a ghoul's best friend."

THE STANDARD

Hong Kong

EDIBLE POETRY: **When 30 professional omnivores are gathered together in Hong Kong for a Chinese imperial banquet the menu, you may be sure, will stretch gastronomic curiosity to its limits.**

At the Mandarin's birthday banquet guests took pleasure in the poetry and wordplay of sounds in the Chinese language, and in the association of certain foods with specific virtues, as well as in the excellence of the dishes before them.

Thus the characters that denote a dish of sautéed shredded turtle with bamboo shoots and black mushrooms may also be read, poetically, as green willow on a falling wave.

THE TIMES

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West were incompatible alternatives. Churchill's point was that they were not, whether Adenauer was Chancellor or not.

Thus Mr Bruegel is really very seriously mistaken to claim that British support for German reunification was a "pretence." Both then and now British policy, rightly in my view, has been to support the German people's right to "national self-determination" in conditions of peace and reconciliation. A change in the leadership of the USSR was an appropriate time to consider the matter, although I am glad that Mr Bruegel agrees with me that any change in the status quo was bound to be extremely risky.

One is therefore bound to conclude that Mr Bruegel's dogmatic assertion that "at no time after 1945 was German reunification a possibility to be taken seriously" is, as my article attempts to show, as unhistorical as it is untrue.

ANTHONY GLEES

Brunel University

Between Lunchtime & Tea

YOUR recent articles on the theologians—Alain Besançon's on "Liberation Theology" (ENCOUNTER, January) and Anthony Hartley's "Bishops in Confusion" (ENCOUNTER, March)—were as relentlessly critical as your general pieces on journalistic malpractice. But one thing I would like to say on behalf of the theologians is that they occasionally betray a sign of humility, a flicker of self-criticism, a touch of humane self-doubt. Surely this is more than one can say for the Fourth Estate's pride and arrogance as exhibited in the Sharon and Westmoreland trials in New York. *Time* and *CBS* are still crowing; they are always right; and even if mistaken they remain exemplary in their "objectivity." You better believe it.

On the other hand, the massive criticisms of the recent theological intervention into public affairs—priests and pastors galore, sounding off on Missiles, Nuclear Freezes, Atomic Submarines, and what-not—seem to be having some effect. How encouraging it is, for those of us who believe that argument can have some creative purpose, to note the recent decision of the General Synod of the Church of England. It had been pushed, by certain naive (not to say mindless) bishops, to declare itself competent on the deployment of new missiles of NATO in Britain (Cruise, etc). After two years of trying to reach a conclusion—the attack and counter-attack with Biblical quotations would have thrilled a King James!—the debate was "indefinitely adjourned."

Speakers at the Synod were—O rare moment in public affairs—complaining of "a lack of expert knowledge" (*The Times*, 16 February, pp.1 and 4) which was after all "needed", they argued, "to evaluate how Cruise missiles fitted into the overall pattern of deterrence. . . ."

One prelate from Norwich averred that "a Cruise missile launched at lunchtime would scarcely reach its target by tea. . . ." Thank God the argument reached its target before the theological counting of noses. The CND promptly expressed its disappointment—"the issue did not stir passions as it had once done. . . ."

Now that the churchmen have opted out of the argument, can the journalists, politicians and even the generals be very far behind? How competent are *they*? And when have they ever been right on target between lunch-time and tea?

JOHN M. LOWELL

Cambridge

Moral Humbug

WHO CAN seriously fault Professor Michael Howard's argument ("Is Winston Churchill Still Relevant?" ENCOUNTER, April) that the survival of our society depends upon a political and educational revival of patriotism? But this has been ruled out by the abolition by Parliament of the recommendations of the Swann Report on a "multicultural" Britain. If he is correct, we have had it at last.

England is no longer a national homeland for the English. It is part of the "Third World", though not everyone has yet realised it. Why else would our ostensible leaders indulge in moral humbug about actions taken by Israelis and Afrikaners fighting for their own national homelands, while remaining silent about communal atrocities in Zimbabwe, police massacres in India, and wholesale executions in China?

RUTH HARRIS

London

Brittan's Britain

SAMUEL BRITTAN ("Thatcherism and Beyond", ENCOUNTER, April) starts from a supposed contrast with Lenin: "With Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, it is the other way round; 'He who is not against her, unreservedly heart and soul, is really for her. . . .' "

Yet almost everything which he says, as well as everything said later in the same issue by Ian Davidson ("The Political Ecology of Britain"), would seem to sustain a precisely contrary estimate. Brittan, without apparently noting any inconsistency, proceeds to ask:

"Why then the anti-Thatcher hysteria, exemplified by the Oxford vote? Why have level-headed people placed Margaret Thatcher on a par with a supporter of violent extra-parliamentary methods such as Arthur Scargill?"

Why indeed? Davidson speaks of "her smashing victory in the 1983 general election." But this "smashing victory" was, thanks to our grossly unfair and unrepresentative electoral system, achieved by a Conservative Party which got a lower proportion of the total vote in 1983 than in 1979.

The truth—a truth which I, for one, deplore—would seem to be that, among a large part of the British electorate, those who are not for her "unreservedly heart and soul" will vote anything but Conservative; and will—along with "so-called liberal journalists and Anglican bishops"—even refuse to support "the legitimate government against attempts to remove it by brute force."

ANTONY FLEW

Department of Philosophy
York University
Ontario

Stalin Boulevard

PAUL LENDVAI (ENCOUNTER, May) is mistaken in saying that Albania is the only country where streets are still named after Stalin. The main thoroughfare of Changchun, a city in North-east China (where I spent an academic year as a lecturer at a nearby teachers' college), is called *Sidalin Dajie*—Stalin Boulevard. The room where I did self-criticism before my Party Secretary in July 1983 had a picture of Mao on the south-facing wall. The opposite wall bore slightly smaller pictures of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Chinese people call them "the four beards."

GILES MATHEWS

London

THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of ENCOUNTER, dated September-October, will appear on 5 September. With the November issue we shall revert to our normal publishing programme (i.e. the November issue will be published on 20 October).

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
Thamesmouth Printing Group,
Service House, Stock Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex

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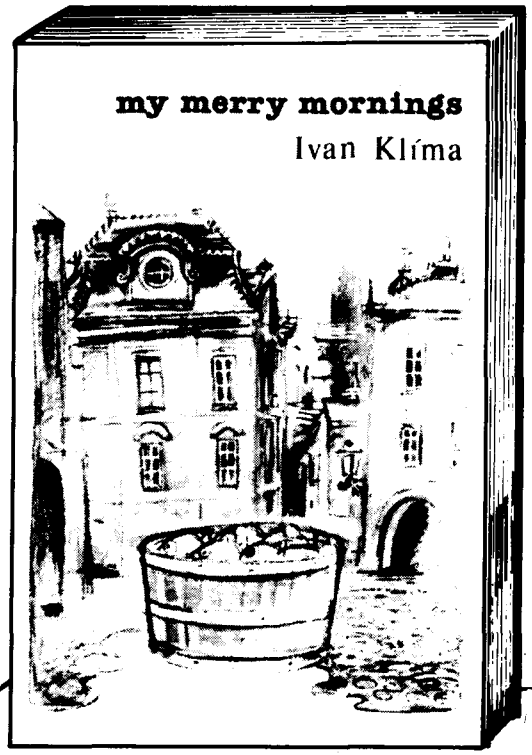

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